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CONTENTS

NOTICE TO READERS: An * indicates material not disseminated in electronic form.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Arab-Israeli Talks

PLO-Israeli Negotiations Continue in Taba 1
Corridors to Jericho Disputed *[Jerusalem Radio]* 1
Jericho Area, Crossings Said Unresolved *[Tel Aviv Radio]* 1
Sha'th Denies Agreement on Jericho Area *[Cairo Radio]* 1
Sha'th: Progress 'Possible' *[Jerusalem International]* 1
Sha'th on Areas of Agreement *[MENA]* 2
Sha'th on Transfer of Civilian Powers *[Jerusalem Radio]* 3
Sha'th Discusses Results of Discussions *[Cairo International]* 3
Delegates Draft Agenda on Differences *[MENA]* 4
More on Decision To Outline Differences *[AFP]* 4
General's Funeral May Suspend Talks *[MENA]* 4

Inter-Arab Affairs

League to Yemeni Leaders: Overcome Differences *[Cairo Radio]* 5
Egypt, Palestinians To Hold Count of Refugees *[MENA]* 5
OAPEC Expected To Return to Kuwait in March *[AFP]* 5

Palestinian Affairs

'Arafat on 'Serious Impact' of Nonimplementation *[MENA]* 6
Economic Agreement With Egypt Expected *[AL-RA'Y 12 Jan]* 6
Reform Delegates Urge 'Arafat To Alter Methods *[London AL-HAYAH 8 Jan]* 7
'Alliance' of Forces To Meet in Damascus 19 Jan *[AL-DUSTUR 12 Jan]* 8
Ghawshah: Dialogue 'Doomed to Failure' *[AL-ASWAQ 12 Jan]* 8
Islamic Jihad Leader on Gaza-Jericho Accord *[AL-QUDS 10 Jan]* 8
Leader of Islamic Movement in Israel Interviewed *[London AL-HAYAH 8 Jan]* 9
Entrepreneurs Announce Plan for 13 New Towns *[Jerusalem Radio]* 10

ARAB AFRICA

Algeria

NDC Spokesman Briefs on Dialogue Process 11
Islamic Detainees To Be Released *[Algiers Radio]* 11
Further on Conference Issues *[Algiers TV]* 11
FIS Leaders Abroad in Contact With Regime *[London AL-HAYAH 8 Jan]* 12
'Arafat Meets With Kafi, Concludes Visit *[Algiers Radio]* 13
Former Official Urges Participation in Talks *[Algiers Radio]* 13
HAMAS Urges 'Responsibility' To Be Accepted *[Algiers TV]* 13
'Terrorist Group' Assassinates Governor *[Algiers TV]* 13
Three Policemen Killed by Islamic Activists *[Paris Radio]* 13

Egypt

Libya Hands Over Three Suspected Militants *[AFP]* 13
Omani Minister Meets Officials, Departs 14
Delivers Message to Mubarak *[Cairo Radio]* 14

Holds Talks With Musa *[Cairo Radio]* 14
Departs Cairo After Talks *[Cairo Radio]* 14
Awqaf Minister Addresses University Meetings 14
Urges Students To Confront 'Terrorism' *[AL-AKHBAR 6 Jan]* 14
Urges Arab, Islamic Unity *[MENA]* 15
Coptic Pope on Vatican, Dialogue, West *[AL-MUSAWWAR 7 Jan]* 15

Libya

Report on U.S. 'Plan' To Topple al-Qadhdhafi *[AL-SHA'B 7 Jan]* 16
JANA Answers Report of Trade Union Disbandment 16

Mauritania

UN Envoy Meets With President Taya, Departs *[Nouakchott Radio]* 17

Sudan

Al-Bashir Urges Committee To Talk to Rebels *[Omdurman Radio]* 17
TNA Speaker: United Factions Cease Fighting *[Omdurman Radio]* 17
Al-Turabi Denies Link Between Regime, NIF *[London AL-HAYAH 11 Jan]* 17
IMF Mission Holds Talks With Finance Official *[Omdurman Radio]* 18

ARABIAN PENINSULA

Kuwait

Bill Exempting Ministers From Trial Fails To Pass *[Kuwait TV]* 19

Oman

Reasons for Libyan Minister's Visit Discussed *[London AL-HAYAH 5 Jan]* 19

Qatar

Foreign Minister Meets Iraqi Counterpart *[Baghdad Radio]* 19

Saudi Arabia

King Fahd Receives Message From Moroccan King *[Riyadh Radio]* 19

Yemen

Committee Agrees on Measures To End Crisis *[JORDAN TIMES 12 Jan]* 20
YSP Denies Undermining Unity *[Paris Radio Monte Carlo]* 20
Salih Urges Fighting All 'Kinds of Sabotage' *[Sanaa Radio]* 20
Attacks Attempts to Undermine Unity *[Sanaa Radio]* 21
Arms Rumors Attempt To 'Poison' Dialogue Effort *[London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 11 Jan]* 22
Salih, al-Bid Talk to Arab League Chief *[Sanaa Radio]* 22
Al-Bid, al-'Attas Meet With U.S. Envoy *[Sanaa Radio]* 22
Former PDRY President Urges Dialogue *[London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 11 Jan]* 23

IRAQ

Talks With UN on Embargo Delayed Two Weeks *[AFP]* 24
Trade Minister on Improved Economic Situation *[INA]* 24
Jordanian Energy Minister Arrives for Talks *[AL-DUSTUR 12 Jan]* 24
Meets With Ramadan *[INA]* 24
Oil Talks Begin 12 Jan *[INA]* 24
Five States To Sign Accord on Sharing Power Grids *[INA]* 25
'Strategic' Carbon Black Project Accomplished *[INA]* 25

ISRAEL

Commander of Central Command Killed in Crash *[Jerusalem Radio]* 26
'Infiltrator' From Jordan Captured at Border *[Tel Aviv Radio]* 26
Peres on Taba Talks, City Building Initiative *[Jerusalem Radio]* 26
'Master Plan' To Expand Jerusalem Detailed *[YEDI'OT AHARONOT 12 Jan]* 26
Group To Go Ahead With 'Shadow Settlements' *[Jerusalem Radio]* 27
IDF Soldier Killed, Another Injured in Qezi'ot *[Tel Aviv Radio]* 27
Haberfeld Wins Primaries for Histadrut Post *[Jerusalem Radio]* 27
Radioactivity Monitoring Stations: 'Security Valve' *[Jerusalem Radio]* 27

JORDAN

Paper Denounces U.S. Search for Israeli Bodies *[AL-RA'Y 11 Jan]* 28
Prime Minister Receives U.S. General Hoar *[Amman Radio]* 28
Officials Confer With General Hoar *[Amman Radio]* 28
Al-Majali Meets Japan's Deputy Foreign Minister *[Amman Radio]* 28
Japan Ready To Extend Economic Aid *[JORDAN TIMES 12 Jan]* 29
Senate Briefed on Peace Process, PLO Accord *[Amman Radio]* 30
Al-Majali Views Relations With Iraq, Kuwait *[AL-DUSTUR 11 Jan]* 30
Israeli Attempts To 'Sow Distrust' Viewed *[SAWT AL-SHA'B 11 Jan]* 30
Verdict in Liberation Party Case To Be Issued *[AL-AWSAQ 11 Jan]* 30
Pan-Arab Action Front Party To Be Licensed *[AL-RA'Y 11 Jan]* 31

LEBANON

Defense Minister on South, Syrian Troops *[Beirut Radio]* 32
Syrian Military Delegation Meets Officials *[Beirut Radio]* 32
Al-Hirawi, Syria's al-Asad Discuss Peace Process *[Beirut Radio]* 32
Birri Declines Meeting With U.S. Congress Team *[Beirut Radio]* 32
Mufti Qabalan Decries U.S. Congressmen's Visit *[Beirut Radio]* 32
Suspected 1986 Berlin Bomber Imprisoned in Tyre *[AL-DIYAR 7 Jan]* 32
Amal Reportedly Attacks Post 11 Jan *[Beirut Radio]* 33

SYRIA

Al-Asad Receives Libyans, al-Qadhdhafi Message *[Damascus Radio]* 34
Media Commentaries View Upcoming Geneva Summit 34
Importance of UN Resolutions Noted *[Damascus Radio]* 34
Success Depends on Pressure on Israel *[Damascus Radio]* 34
'Scenario' of Summit Detailed *[London AL-HAYAH 11 Jan]* 35
Syrian Role in Summit Viewed *[Damascus Radio]* 36
Israel's Attempts To 'Disturb' Summit Seen *[Damascus Radio]* 37
Full Israeli Withdrawal From Golan Demanded *[Damascus Radio]* 38
Rabbi: No Restrictions Remain on Syrian Jews *[London AL-HAYAH 11 Jan]* 38

SOUTH ASIA

Afghanistan

Rabbani: War Has Entered 'Decisive Stage' *[Islamabad Radio]* 40
Lafra'i: Hekmatyar No Longer in Government *[Delhi Radio]* 40
'Warmongers,' Stingers, Other Equipment Captured *[Radio Message of Freedom]* 40
Hashemi-Rafsanjani Declares Iran Ready To Help *[Tehran Radio]* 40

Bangladesh

India's Proposals at JEC Meeting Rejected *[ANANDABAZAR PATRIKA 30 Dec]* 42
Central Bank Issues Annual Report for 1992-93 *[THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER 6 Jan]* 43

India

Contribution to Afghan Peace Initiative Offered *[Delhi Radio]* 43
Diplomats Arrive in New Delhi *[Delhi Radio]* 43
Pakistan's Threat of Nuclear War Dismissed *[Delhi Radio]* 43
Pakistani Nuclear Weapons Program Reviewed *[THE HINDUSTAN TIMES 2 Jan]* 44
Kashmiri Hindus Demand Homeland *[NAVBHARAT TIMES 25 Dec]* 45
Israeli Minister Meets Singh, Backs Kashmir Stand *[NAVBHARAT TIMES 25 Dec]* 45
Clinton Letter to KAC Director Criticized *[INDIAN EXPRESS 7 Jan]* 45
Bilateral Agricultural Pact Signed With Israel *[NAVBHARAT TIMES 25 Dec]* 46

Iran

British Embassy Attacked; Role of MKO Debated 46
Daily Claims MKO Behind Attack *[IRNA]* 46
MKO Refutes Charges, Blames Government *[AFP]* 47
President Urges Afghan Mojahedin To Unite *[Tehran Radio]* 47
Media Comment on Clashes in Afghanistan 47
Cooperation Among Factions Urged *[Tehran Radio]* 47
Daily Faults Afghan Leaders *[IRNA]* 48
Editorial Criticizes Clashes *[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI 3 Jan]* 48
Regional Official on Trade With Afghanistan
[EQTESAD-E KHORASAN ECONOMIC WEEKLY 1 Jan] 49
Tehran Ready To Continue Talks With UAE *[IRNA]* 50
Editorial on Israel Giving Arms to 'Arafat *[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI 29 Dec]* 50
Papers Comment on Damascus Meeting *[IRNA]* 51
Iraqi Cease-Fire Violations Reported to UN *[IRNA]* 51
Editorial Denounces 'Savage Massacre' of Kurds *[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI 4 Jan]* 52
Western 'Rivalry' Over Saudi Arms Market Viewed *[Tehran Radio]* 53
Commentary on OPEC, Non-OPEC Oil Production *[Tehran Radio]* 53
Chamber of Commerce Official on GATT Membership *[IRNA]* 54
Editorial Forecasts 'Difficult Days' for U.S. *[ABRAR 29 Dec]* 54
Southern Oil Field Begins Production *[Tehran Radio]* 55

Pakistan

Spokesman Reacts to Indian Remarks on Kashmir *[Islamabad TV]* 55
Editorial Views Risk of Nuclear War With India *[JANG 10 Jan]* 55
Editorial Decries Plight of Bosnian Muslims *[JANG 10 Jan]* 56

Sri Lanka

High Command Blamed for Pooneryn Casualties *[AFP]* 56
LTTE Reportedly Imprisoned 1,500 of its Cadres *[Colombo International]* 56
LTTE's Death Sentence for Mahattaya Opposed *[Colombo International]* 57
Military Forces Prepare for Major Conflict *[VIRAKESARI 26 Dec]* 57

Arab-Israeli Talks

PLO-Israeli Negotiations Continue in Taba

Corridors to Jericho Disputed

TA1101123694 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1105 GMT 11 Jan 94

[Report by Moti Amir in Taba]

[Text] There is no longer any dispute over the size of the autonomy in Jericho, which was decided on in the Cairo understandings. The dispute now is over the corridors the PLO is demanding to Jericho. In the wake of the understandings reached in Cairo, the Palestinians demanded three corridors be put under the control of the autonomy: from the holy sites of (al-Manta), north of Jericho; al-Nabi Musa, east of the town, and a corridor to the Dead Sea's Lido beach, south of Jericho. The Jericho issue has therefore not be resolved.

On the other hand, a breakthrough has apparently been made on the border crossings, on which there is agreement. Yesterday, the Palestinians were shown an outline of the two border crossings points in Jericho and Rafah. They did not react and up to this moment they have not disputed the main points they saw in the diagrams last night.

In the meantime, the Taba negotiations are taking place in two working groups. One group is discussing the joint drafting of an agreement. It started with the issues on which there is already agreement. A sort of civilian cabinet, in which the heads of delegation—Amnon Shahaq and Nabil Sha'th—are participating, is holding a discussion prior to the convening of the subcommittee on civilian affairs.

We have already said that there is apparently an Israeli-Palestinian agreement on border crossings, as well as on an agenda for the negotiations, and an agreement that the negotiations would be based on the Cairo understandings.

We are now waiting for the two committees to conclude their deliberations and for the negotiations to resume in a limited plenum with seven representatives from each side discussing the issues in dispute.

[Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew at 1100 GMT on 11 January in a report by Netan'el Semrik quotes 'Ami Glusqa, spokesman for the Israeli delegation, as saying in a recorded passage: "The aim is to conduct businesslike negotiations in order to draft the understandings and agreements." The members of the Israeli drafting team are Foreign Ministry legal adviser Yo'el Singer, Brigadier General David Agmon, and Brig. Gen. Tzvi Stauber.]

Jericho Area, Crossings Said Unresolved

TA1101161394 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1400 GMT 11 Jan 94

[Report from Taba by Netan'el Semrik—live]

[Excerpts] In a media briefing held in Taba a half an hour ago, Israeli elements said that no agreement has been achieved so far, and the sides are not even close to an agreement on any of the issues on the agenda. [passage omitted covered in referent item]

A mini-storm broke out after REUTER announced that an agreement had been achieved on the size of the Jericho area, with angry people rushing about making dozens of telephone calls. The bottom line is that no such agreement has been attained.

A short while ago, Israeli delegation sources said: The Cairo understandings are neither an agreement nor a signed document. Although the understandings are not legally binding, they are a fact. In addition, today's discussions revealed gaps in the interpretations of the understandings.

The chief Palestinian delegate today accused Israel of being unwilling to complete the draft within three weeks.

[Begin Nabil Sha'th recording, in English] Obviously, many statements have come out showing that the Israeli party is not ready to finish in three weeks. I repeat: If goodwill is there, and if the decision to reach an agreement is there, three weeks is enough, but if it's not there.... [end recording]

[In a live telephone interview earlier in the newsreel, Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres was asked by reporter 'Arad Nir about "chief Palestinian delegate Nabil Sha'th's implication that Israel is guilty of trying to stall the talks." Peres replied: "If our repudiating their rejection of the Cairo agreement means stalling, then we are stalling. I am still convinced that we did reach understandings in Cairo, and they bind both delegations."]

The sides also disagree on the border crossings issue, in addition to the size of Jericho. These two issues are now being discussed on the upper floor. [passage omitted]

Sha'th Denies Agreement on Jericho Area

NC1101164794 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 11 Jan 94

[Text] Dr. Nabil Sha'th, head of the Palestinian delegation in the Taba negotiations, today denied reports that an agreement has been reached between the Palestinian and Israeli delegations regarding the size of the Jericho area, estimated at 55 kilometers.

In statements to correspondents, Sha'th described such reports as fabricated, noting that no agreement will be announced until a settlement acceptable to the two parties is achieved.

Sha'th: Progress 'Possible'

JN1101165894 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Arabic 1530 GMT 11 Jan 94

[Interview with Nabil Sha'th, head of the Palestinian delegation to Israeli-Palestinian talks, by Hasan Abu-Zayid in Taba on 11 January, carried within "With The Events" program—recorded]

[Text] [Abu-Zayid] Dr. Nabil Sha'th, head of the Palestinian delegation, has there been any progress in the talks with the Israeli delegation?

[Sha'th] Our return to Taba was aimed at achieving progress. We are not here to gain time or waste time. We are here to conclude the final agreement as soon as possible. Progress is faster on the level of Civil Administration and the transfer of civilian authority than it is on the level of security issues, which will take a long time and need intensive talks. We are doing just that. We have been discussing this all day today inside the drafting committees. I think it is possible to achieve progress and it is not a question of me being more optimistic or pessimistic than others, the question is commitment. We were committed to end these negotiations on 13 December. There has been a delay for various reasons, but we are now back to where we were on 12 December, the little progress achieved in Cairo and Strasbourg notwithstanding. So why should this work take so much time? We have to finish this job as quickly as possible. Two or three weeks are more than enough provided there is a political will to finish this job at the necessary time.

[Abu-Zayid] Have you sensed such a will and a desire on the Israeli side?

[Sha'th] In fact, the head of the Israeli delegation, General Shahaq, has expressed optimism and stressed the need to reach agreement as soon as possible. I have not heard anything to the contrary from him. However, we hear statements from officials in Israel that are different from what we here from the negotiating team. I hope these statements are not aimed at exerting pressure. We should be pressing to end the work and not to postpone it.

[Abu-Zayid] Dr. Nabil Sha'th: What about the border crossings problem?

[Sha'th] The border crossings issue is one of the special and important problems that have taken so much of our time. I think we can reach a solution to this problem that will meet our aspirations and realize national and individual dignity for the Palestinian citizens, as well as security for Israel and for us. I think we will reach agreement on this issue.

[Abu-Zayid] Has there been any progress in this regard?

[Sha'th] I believe there was some progress indeed. But we have not yet reached an agreement that we can sign.

[Abu-Zayid] And what about the size of Jericho?

[Sha'th] We still at the same point where we left off in Cairo. Of course, we hope there will be progress and I do not see why there shouldn't be progress. The Jericho problem can be discussed as part of the immediate problems, to which we give special attention in these talks.

[Abu-Zayid] Israeli sources reportedly said the Palestinians have dropped the Jericho area demand...

[Sha'th, interrupting and chuckling] I have heard that and that Mr. Glusca, to whom this statement was attributed, has disassociated himself from this position. This was communicated to me by General Shahaq, head of the Israeli negotiating team. For my part, I deny that any agreement has been reached on that score.

[Abu-Zayid] Dr. Nabil Sha'th: Are the Palestinians willing to let the settlements remain in the self-rule area?

[Sha'th] The Declaration of Principles reached in Oslo and signed in Washington provided for the settlements to remain. This in no way means we approve of the settlements. It means the fate of the settlements will await the negotiations on the final status of the occupied land. For the moment, the sticking point holding up the signing of an agreement is the exact area of these settlements. The Israeli side shares our position that the defense and security of the settlements must come from within these outposts. There remains the problem, though, of a definition of the settlements' boundaries.

Sha'th on Areas of Agreement

NC1101215994 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2110 GMT 11Jan 94

[Text] Taba, 11 Jan (MENA)—Dr. Nabil Sha'th, head of the Palestinian delegation to the Gaza-Jericho self-rule talks, has stated that there is no agreement yet on the Jericho area, noting that the Palestinians did not make any concessions regarding this issue in today's talks.

Speaking to journalists this evening, Sha'th pointed out that an agreement had been reached about the (?self-rule measures) in the fields of telephones, electricity, roads, civil register, economic issues, and some other issues as part of the civilian subcommittee work. He added that the questions of water and archaeology have not yet been discussed, while there is a dispute over the planning of urban areas. He pointed out that so far 20 out of 38 items on the agenda of the civilian subcommittee have been finalized.

Dr. Sha'th noted that the drafting subcommittee will begin its work tomorrow, Wednesday, to formulate issues related to the final agreement, the Palestinian authority, and legal matters. Sha'th stressed the need to discuss the points of difference during the current talks and not wait for a later stage. He noted that the security subcommittee, headed on the Palestinian side by Hasan 'Asfur, concluded its meeting today and will meet again tomorrow, Wednesday, in view of the important security issues on its agenda. Expressing optimism, Sha'th added that the peace process will continue so long as there is goodwill. He stressed that the three-week period is enough time to reach a draft agreement.

Commenting on Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres' remarks today that there will be no Israeli withdrawal by 13 April as scheduled, Sha'th said: I know that the talks may take more than three weeks, but this depends on the two sides' commitment to reach peace.

Sha'th on Transfer of Civilian Powers

TA1201060994 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500 GMT 12 Jan 94

[Text] The head of the Palestinian delegation to the Taba talks, Nabil Sha'th, says there was substantial progress on the transfer of civil powers to the autonomous authority to be set up in Gaza and Jericho. Sha'th told reporters that the two sides formulated proposals to transfer powers of 12 Israeli Civil Administration departments to the Palestinians. He felt that within two days the entire issue could be finalized.

The Palestinian delegation head said also there had been some progress on security issues, but nothing was final on the question of the Jericho enclave area, and on the border crossing points. He said that the negotiations were taking place in a positive atmosphere.

Sha'th Discusses Results of Discussions

NC1201084594 Cairo Voice of the Arabs in Arabic 0610 GMT 12 Jan 94

[Telephone interview with Nabil Sha'th, head of the Palestinian delegation to the negotiations on implementing the Palestinian-Israeli Declaration of Principles, in Taba, by Ramadan Husayn, in Cairo, carried on the "Dialogue from Afar" program on 12 January—recorded]

[Text] [Husayn] Welcome to the Voice of the Arabs.

[Sha'th] Thank you.

[Husayn] Dr. Nabil, could you please brief us on the results of the meetings of the past two days?

[Sha'th] The talks seek to reach a written, signed agreement so that the Israeli withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho can begin as soon as possible. We have returned to Taba following a hiatus in the talks during which the Palestinian-Israeli Liaison Committee dealt with complicated issues including control over the border crossings and specifying the size of the Jericho area and the security zones that will surround the Israeli settlements in Gaza. We are still discussing these issues, among many others. We have a committee discussing the transfer of civilian powers to the Palestinian national authority in Gaza and Jericho. This committee has been successful and has already decided on the transfer of most departments. The Security Committee has been discussing the border crossings, Jericho, and other security issues. A third committee will formulate the general agreement that will also deal with the Palestinian national authority's powers.

[Husayn] Dr. Nabil, in what spheres have you made progress? What spheres remain pending?

[Sha'th] Progress has been made in the transfer of civilian powers. Discussions within the Security Committee are very slow and difficult. This is really the consequence of the Israeli attitude to these issues, especially as they are raising the stakes, insisting that the discussions will last long, and that they will not observe the 13 April date for completing withdrawal. Their public statements that they will not observe the agreement hinder progress on the security issue, the biggest problem in the negotiations.

[Husayn] Have you proposed a compromise on control over the border crossings?

[Sha'th] Each side is making proposals. But I believe we need to negotiate much more before we can announce real progress on this issue.

[Husayn] Dr. Nabil, after reports from Taba said that agreement had been reached specifying the size of the Jericho area as 55 sq km, you denied this and said the reports were fabricated. What are the facts?

[Sha'th] The reports were fabricated. The Israeli spokesman said the same when he was asked. The head of the Israeli delegation Major General Shahaq also stated that they were fabricated reports.

[Husayn] Have you reached a solution on specifying the size of the Jericho area?

[Sha'th] We are still working on it. Brother, these are the difficult points. They need much effort.

[Husayn] Dr. Sha'th, I believe that Maj. Gen. Shahaq stated that the Israeli delegation came to Taba to negotiate over what he called the Cairo document. What do you think of this statement?

[Sha'th] I believe this news has also been distorted. We are negotiating on the basis of the Declaration of Principles and the Cairo concepts. On some of these concepts the two delegations are close to each other and on others they are far apart. Hence, there is no such thing as a Cairo agreement, merely several concepts. Doubtless, we will profit from the ideas on which we have agreed. We will continue negotiating to reach agreement on the rest.

[Husayn] Dr. Sha'th, the Israeli delegation reportedly presented 10 different maps to the Palestinian negotiators yesterday, Tuesday. How true is this? What can you tell us about the maps?

[Sha'th] True. They submitted maps about new areas they have added to Jericho. They also submitted maps reducing the security areas around the Gaza settlements. They also proposed architectural plans for the border crossing buildings. All this reflected Israeli positions, which, although more advanced, remain insufficient for Palestinian purposes.

[Husayn] Dr. Nabil Sha'th, in a move seen by observers as U.S. intervention, or rather assistance, the U.S. State Department issued a statement yesterday, Tuesday, urging the Palestinian and Israeli delegations to find prompt solutions to the unresolved issues. Do you see any significance in this U.S. statement?

[Sha'th] I believe the Americans want the Palestinians and Israelis to make some progress before the meeting between Presidents Hafiz al-Asad and Bill Clinton. I believe that pressure should be applied to the Israelis. As for us, we are willing to achieve results as fast as possible.

[Husayn] Will you ask Egypt, the United States, or any other party to intervene if the Israeli attitude remains the same?

[Sha'th] Naturally, if there is no progress. The Egyptians maintain constant contact with us and are following every development.

[Husayn] We thank Dr. Nabil Sha'th.

[Sha'th] Thank you.

Delegates Draft Agenda on Differences

NC1101193194 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1819 GMT 11 Jan 94

[Text] Taba, 11 Jan (MENA)—A slight breakthrough was made in the Palestinian-Israeli talks in Taba today when Dr. Nabil Sha'th, political adviser to Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat, and Amnon Shahaq, Israel's deputy chief of staff, following a closed meeting this evening agreed on the agenda of talks to be held by the two delegations tomorrow, Wednesday.

Israeli sources said after the second meeting, which concluded at 1800 [1600 GMT] today, the drafting committee had started to formulate a draft agenda in light of two papers submitted by the Palestinians and the Israelis. The draft agenda outlines the views of each party and the apparent differences in views over the area of Jericho, the crossing points, and the settlements in Gaza.

The Israeli source, who declined to be named, pointed out that the draft agenda includes all the points of difference, which will be left to a later stage. The source noted that the current round of Taba talks is expected to conclude on Wednesday or Thursday at the latest and that a new round of talks will be held on Monday in Taba.

Informed sources noted that the absence of 'Uzi Dayan, head of the General Staff's Planning Department, from today's talks contributed to the slight breakthrough resulting from the talks held between the two heads of delegations during the morning session.

From the Palestinian side, the drafting committee comprises 'Abd-al-Raziq al-Yahya, former commander of the Palestine Liberation Army; and Dr. Camille Mansur, holder of a doctorate in law from the Sorbonne University. The Israeli side of the committee includes General David Agmon, adviser to the chief of staff on the intifadah; Yoel Singer, Foreign Ministry legal adviser; and military prosecutor (Alan Shif).

More on Decision To Outline Differences

NC1101130494 Paris AFP in English 1158 GMT 11 Jan 94

[Report by Jo Strich]

[Excerpt] Taba, Egypt, Jan 11 (AFP)—Israel and the PLO began Tuesday [11 January] to draw up a list of points upon which they agree and differ during negotiations to implement autonomy in the Gaza Strip and Jericho.

"A drafting committee (on military issues) has started to write down the subjects on which we agree and the security questions on which differences remain," Israel delegation spokesman Colonel Ami Gluska told AFP.

"The delegation head to the committee on civilian issues are doing the same," he added.

The military committee, made up of a jurist and a military officer from either side, met in a ninth floor suite of the Hilton hotel at the Egyptian Red Sea resort of Taba where negotiations resumed on Monday.

Foreign ministry legal adviser Yoel Singer and General David Agmon, a chief-of-staff adviser on the intifadah, were drafting a document with Camille Mansur, an international law professor, and Palestine Liberation Army General 'Abd-al-Raziq al-Yahya.

The four face the main issues which have delayed application of the September 13 autonomy deal—the size of the Jericho enclave and the control of borders and crossings between the autonomous areas and Jordan and Egypt.

Israeli General Gadi Zohar, head of the military administration in the West Bank, and Palestinian businessman Jamil Tarifi, met to draw up a list for the civilian committee which covers the transfer of powers to the Palestinian authority for health, education, direct taxation, social welfare and tourism.

The decision to draft a list of points was taken by Israeli deputy chief-of-staff General Amnon Shahaq and the PLO's Nabil Sha'th during a lengthy tete-a-tete in Taba on Tuesday morning.

It followed the suspension of negotiations on December 29 when the PLO denied an Israeli claim that a written understanding had been reached in Cairo on border crossings and Jericho.

Menawhile the Palestinians continued to demand an access to the Dead Sea and several religious sites south of the Jericho enclave.

"We are no longer talking about square kilometres for Jericho," Palestinian spokesman Hasan 'Asfur said.

"We are demanding that certain positions in the region be under Palestinian control, such as religious sites, access to the Dead Sea, private land and areas inhabited by Palestinians," he said.

Israeli spokesman Gluska told AFP there was "no agreement with the Palestinians on the boundaries of the Jericho territory because there is nothing new in the PLO proposals." [passage omitted]

General's Funeral May Suspend Talks

NC1201114794 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1030 GMT 12 Jan 94

[Text] Taba, 12 Jan (MENA)—The Palestinian and Israeli negotiators resumed their talks in Taba this morning with

a private meeting between the heads of the Palestinian and Israeli delegations, Dr. Nabil Sha'th and General Amnon Shahaq.

The Civilian Committee met under Jamil al-Tarifi for the Palestinian side and Jadi Zohar for the Israeli side. The Security Committee met under Hasan 'Asfur for the Palestinian side and General 'Uzi Dayan for the Israeli side.

Palestinian sources have said that all the issues regarding the transfer of civilian authority to the Palestinian side, including water, antiquities, land registration, and other topics, could be finalized at this round of talks. Some 20 of 39 topics on the transfer of civilian authority to the Palestinians in the Gaza Strip and Jericho area have been finalized.

The Palestinian sources said the Security Committee will discuss security details, not general topics, and that it is hoped the Security Committee will make progress similar to the progress made by the committee on the transfer of civilian authority. The sources added that the Palestinian side wants "access" to the Dead Sea so that the self-rule authority will not feel it lives in a "ghetto" among the Israelis.

Palestinian sources have stated that the death of Israeli General Nehemya Tamari in a helicopter crash near Jerusalem might cause the talks to be suspended this evening. The sources said General Tamari was a prominent figure in the Israeli army and a personal friend of General Amon Shahaq and other Israeli delegation members, who might want to attend his funeral tomorrow.

Inter-Arab Affairs

League to Yemeni Leaders: Overcome Differences

NC1101171694 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 11 Jan 94

[Text] Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid today telephoned Yemeni President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih and Vice President 'Ali Salim al-Bid regarding the latest developments in Yemen.

Meanwhile, the Arab League Secretariat General issued a statement today in which it said that it is following with extreme concern the developments taking place in Yemen, which affect its national unity, security, and stability.

The Secretariat General called on all the Yemeni national forces to safeguard the historic achievement in Yemen and overcome all the differences preventing national reconciliation.

Egypt, Palestinians To Hold Count of Refugees

NC1201113194 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1010 GMT 12 Jan 94

[Text] Cairo, 12 Jan (MENA)—Palestinian Ambassador in Cairo Sa'id Kamal has stressed that the Egyptian Government and the state of Palestine have agreed to conduct a complete count of Palestinian refugees living in Egypt and in the diaspora effective 15 January.

In an exclusive statement to MENA, Sa'id Kamal said a joint Palestinian-Egyptian committee met in September and decided to hold the count to guarantee the right of return for the Palestinian refugees. This step is a prelude to the meetings of the Palestinian-Israeli ministerial follow-up committee, which will discuss the Palestinian refugees problem, Kamal added.

The Palestine ambassador in Cairo said the count will not revoke the Palestinian citizen's right to live and work in Egypt. He noted that special forms have been prepared and will be distributed among the Palestinian refugees from 15 January at the al-Tahiri compound in Cairo and Egyptian consulates abroad. He said that these forms are optional, not compulsory, noting that the count would serve the interest of the Palestinian citizen. It also aims to find jobs for unemployed Palestinians within the framework of development programs sponsored by the Palestinian authority, Sa'id Kamal added.

In his statement, the Palestinian ambassador said that Faruq Qaddumi, head of the PLO Political Department, has instructed the Palestinian embassies in Arab and foreign countries to coordinate with the Egyptian consulates in charge of the count.

OAPEC Expected To Return to Kuwait in March

NC1101141394 Paris AFP in English 1336 GMT 11 Jan 94

[Report by Nadim Kawash]

[Text] Abu Dhabi, Jan 11 (AFP)—A dispute between Iraq and Kuwait is delaying the return of the Organisation of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC) to its Kuwait headquarters after an absence of more than three years, Gulf oil sources said on Tuesday [11 January].

OAPEC moved to Cairo after Iraqi troops invaded Kuwait in August 1990.

Kuwait has refused to grant entry visas to the organisation's Iraqi staff, delaying a seven-month-old decision to shift back to Kuwait from its temporary headquarters in Cairo, the sources said.

But intensive diplomatic contacts within the 10-member group have made progress and OAPEC is expected to be back in Kuwait by June.

"The problem is on its way to a solution. OAPEC will start moving back to Kuwait in March and the shift will be completed by June. Procedural matters have also delayed the move," said one source, who is close to OAPEC.

Several other Arab organisations also left the emirate but most of them have returned since it was liberated by a U.S-led international coalition in February 1991.

The invasion prompted Kuwait and its partners in the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) to suspend Iraq's membership from all their joint groups, including

the United Arab Shipping Company and the regional organisation for the protection of marine environment.

"The return of OAPEC to Kuwait has political implications," a Gulf source said. "It shows the situation is back to normal and Kuwait is again assuming its role in Arab politics, oil and other activities." OAPEC oil ministers decided to move back to Kuwait at talks in Cairo in June and they reasserted the decision at their conference in Damascus in November.

The organisation was created in Beirut in 1968 by Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Libya and later it was joined by iraq, Algeria, Syria, Bahrain, Qatar, Egypt and the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Tunisia also joined the organisation but its membership was suspended three years ago at its request.

OAPEC, which is open for all Arab oil producers, was set up with the primary aim of promoting energy cooperation among members states through joint projects. Its operations do not cover oil production and price policies.

Saudi Arabia, the world's top crude exporter and producer, and six other OAPEC states are members of the 12-nation Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), which chalks out output and price policies.

Palestinian Affairs

'Arafat on 'Serious Impact' of Nonimplementation

NC1201112394 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0932 GMT 12 Jan 94

[Text] Algiers, 12 Jan (MENA)—Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat has warned that Israel's nonadherence to a faithful and meticulous implementation of its agreement with the Palestinians will lead to general disorder in the region. He pointed out that the Palestinians will not be the only party to lose from this disorder. He said that failing to implement the agreement will have a serious impact on the overall regional situation.

In an interview with the Algerian newspaper AL-SHA'B published today, 'Arafat announced that the world must know that this agreement is not merely a Palestinian-Israeli agreement, because it was signed by the U.S. secretary of state and the Russian foreign minister representing the sponsor countries and supervised by President Clinton.

'Arafat voiced regret that the peace sponsors have failed to act.

He reiterated his praise of the Egyptian role in promoting the peace process, declaring that it helped to resume the negotiations after they reached a deadlock in Oslo, Paris, and Cairo.

'Arafat hinted that Israel obtained full reward from the United States in return for signing the agreement, illustrated by fresh supplies of modern weapons, the largest computer in the world, "the giant computer," $240 million to cover its redeployment costs, and $10 billion in loan guarantees. Noting that it also obtained recognition by various countries, most recently the Vatican, he said it is now seeking to avoid what it has signed after getting the reward.

'Arafat remarked that the negotiations reached a deadlock because of Israel's ploys and its erroneous interpretations of the agreement's clauses. He explained that the Israelis maintain that withdrawal means redeployment and want to control the border crossings on the pretext of protecting their external security, which would mean that the Palestinians would live in "Bantustans," something that is unacceptable.

'Arafat continued: The Israelis cannot set traps for us. We know how to deal with these issues. We tell them that if they believe they can shirk implementing the agreement, then the region will go up in flames.

He pointed out that the attempt to resume settlement activity in Jerusalem with the Israeli Government's total support violates the agreement.

'Arafat remarked: They want to change Jerusalem's landmarks to make it Jewish. I say it belongs to Muslims and Christians everywhere. This is the first Qiblah [direction in which Muslims turn to pray] and the third holy mosque.

Commenting on the forthcoming summit between Presidents al-Asad and Clinton, 'Arafat said it seeks to reach an agreement on the Golan Heights and Lebanon and that it will carry no surprises.

Asked about inter-PLO relations, 'Arafat explained that the Palestinian democratic model is known. Every party, he said, has the right to express its view.

He added: We are dealing with each other well. No one should try to outbid the Palestinian sacrifices in blood.

He declared: We have endorsed pluralism and democracy. We defend them and fight for their sake. In this context, every party can express its views.

Asked if the Israeli stance might be backed by some Arab parties, 'Arafat said it could be, because the Israelis are trying to benefit from inter-Arab differences.

The Palestinian president revealed that the Palestinian leadership expected Israel to try to back away from the Washington agreement, noting that the first sign of a retraction occurred during the Israeli election, which brought down Shamir and his political program.

'Arafat declared that when he concluded an agreement with the Israelis he meant a "peace of the brave," adding that if they don't understand what "the peace of the brave" means, then there are many ways of making them understand.

Economic Agreement With Egypt Expected

JN1201111294 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 12 Jan 94 p 29

[Report by 'Awdah 'Awdah]

[Text] PLO Executive Committee member Yasir 'Amr expects the forthcoming summit between Presidents Bill Clinton and Hafiz al-Asad to produce positive results on all tracks of the peace process, particularly on the Palestinian track.

In a statement to AL-RAY, 'Amr emphasized the importance of Arab coordination to face the challenges of this stage, particularly before this important meeting.

'Amr also said the PLO will sign an economic agreement with the Egyptian Government within the next few days, and expected that PLO Political Department head Faruq Qaddumi, or Fan-Arab Department head Mahmud 'Abbas, alias Abu-Mazin, will sign this agreement in Cairo.

He said the signing of economic agreements between Palestine and its Arab neighbors is affirmation of its inseparable links with the Arab nation. He emphasized that the signing of the Palestinian-Jordanian economic agreement, and then the Palestinian-Egyptian economic agreement is evidence of the desire of the PLO and the Palestinian people to eliminate the Israeli economic hegemony after 26 years of occupation.

'Amr said the Palestinian objective out of signing such economic agreements is not to gain profits, but to entrench a line that the Palestinian people have been following for centuries, which is that they are an inseparable part of their Arab nation and Arab homeland.

He stressed that concluding this economic agreement between Palestine and Egypt is very important due to the past links between the Gaza Strip and the Egyptian Government, especially after the occupation of Palestine in 1948.

In an answer to a question, 'Amr said the Egyptian pound will not be the main currency [in the self-rule areas], and said Palestinian technical committees will organize all issues included in this agreement.

Reform Delegates Urge 'Arafat To Alter Methods

PM110112/0094 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 9 Jan 94 p 3

[Rashid Khashanah report: "Four Palestinian Leadership Members Urge 'Arafat To Change Working Methods"]

[Text] Tunis—PLO Executive Committee member Samir Ghawshah has emphasized to AL-HAYAH that the committee has authorized Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi to form a national Palestinian dialogue committee and that it has not specified the names of its members. Dr. 'Abd-al-Shafi met with Yasir 'Arafat and Executive Committee members for four days this week in Tunis.

Ghawshah pointed out that the Executive Committee authorized Dr. 'Abd-al-Shafi, who submitted to the Palestinian president a memorandum demanding that reforms be made in PLO institutions, to choose members of the national dialogue committee without intervention from the PLO leadership.

He added that the Executive Committee has agreed in principle to set up a special department to develop human resources in the PLO and admit new capabilities to the planning council supervising the Palestinian planning center belonging to the PLO.

Ghawshah denied that the Executive Committee members are responsible for President 'Arafat's monopolization of power and decisionmaking.

At a press conference held in Tunis the day before yesterday Dr. 'Abd-al-Shafi criticized the Executive Committee members, saying they were encouraging him ('Arafat) by keeping silent about his continued monopolization of power. But Ghawshah stressed to AL-HAYAH that he had sent to three Executive Committee members—namely Mahmud 'Abbas (Abu-Mazin), Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh, and Sulayman al-Najjab—an internal memorandum to President 'Arafat containing four major points to change the leadership's working methods toward democracy. He pointed out that the four Executive Committee members returned recently to attend the committee's meetings after a period of seclusion, following the president's agreement to their demands, which are:

1. To hold the Executive Committee meetings on the basis of a quorum, that is half the members plus one (10 members), considering it the source of decisions, with the possibility of holding mini-meetings for consultations only, but at which no decisions should be made.

2. To reactivate the committee following up the negotiations and consider it the body supervising the negotiation process. The Executive Committee responded to this demand and decided officially to revive the committee, which includes Abu-Mazin (chairman), 'Abd-Rabbuh (deputy chairman), al-Najjab, and Ghawshah.

3. To submit a detailed report on the financial crisis in the PLO and to consider the Executive Committee the body authorized to supervise financial matters in the PLO. Juwayd al-Ghusayn, chairman of the Palestinian National Fund, pledged to submit a comprehensive report on financial conditions in the PLO at the Executive Committee's next meeting.

4. To draft the basic law of the national authority on a democratic basis and to lay the foundations capable of effecting PLO institutions.

At the end of last month the Executive Committee devoted three meetings to discussing the draft fundamental law (constitution). Then it referred it to Palestinian committees and institutions inside and in the diaspora to debate it and express their views.

At another level, Ghawshah confirmed that the Executive Committee will convene after the delegation headed by PLO Political Department head Faruq Qaddumi returns to Tunis in order to discuss Palestinian-Jordanian relations in the stage ahead.

'Alliance' of Forces To Meet in Damascus 19 Jan

JN1201091894 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 12 Jan 94 pp 32, 25

[By Tawfiq 'Abid]

[Text] Engineer Ibrahim Ghawshah, official spokesman for the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, has said the Alliance of Palestinian Forces [APF] will hold a meeting in Damascus on 19 January to choose a president for the alliance and determine the term of the presidency of each faction, which will be periodic.

Ghawshah told AL-DUSTUR that the APF's decisions will be made unanimously and that any decision that is not approved unanimously will not be implemented. Each faction has the veto right.

Ghawshah added that Hamas will present its agenda for the first meeting after the formation of the APF. The agenda discusses the role of national conferences, the way they are formed, and escalating the intifadah and jihad operations inside the territories.

Hamas will also present a program of action in the Arab and international arenas by forming a delegation to represent the APF to visit Arab, Islamic, and foreign countries and explain the APF's view of political developments in the region and threats facing Jerusalem and the Palestine question.

It is worth mentioning that the 10 factions which oppose the negotiations with Israel and seek to thwart the Palestinian-Israeli agreement last week adopted the name Alliance of Palestinian Forces.

Answering a question, Ghawshah said: The APF's membership was confined to representatives of the 10 factions. This means we have no room for independents in the APF. He added: We have previously suggested allocating 20 percent of the seats to independents, but last week the 10 factions in general were for the idea of accord and equal weight in the Palestinian arena.

Ghawshah: Dialogue 'Doomed to Failure'

JN1201100194 Amman AL-ASWAQ in Arabic 12 Jan 94 pp 1, 16

[Report by 'Abd-al-Rahman al-Khatib]

[Text] Ibrahim Ghawshah, official spokesman of the Hamas Movement, has said that the first meeting of the central command of the Alliance of Palestinian Forces [APF] will be held in Damascus on 19 January 1994.

The APF was officially set up last week after its factions agreed on its political and organizational program.

Ghawshah rejected the argument that Hamas has conceded its demand for a 40 percent share of the alliance's central establishments. In answer to a question by AL-ASWAQ, he said: We, in Hamas, have declared from the beginning that we are committed to the formula of the 10 factions, considering this formula as the minimum acceptable by the Palestinian forces opposed to a settlement with the Zionist entity.

Ghawshah added: The formula that was approved is more advanced than that of the 10 factions although it is less than the one we were hoping for. In view of the insistence of some brothers in some factions on this formula, we decided to approve this formula after some members admitted that it is a phased formula, and that representation according to the size of each faction is necessary, but at later stages.

Ghawshah stressed that the reconstruction of the PLO establishments on democratic bases will take into consideration the size and strength of each faction after agreeing on the yardsticks for deciding size and strength.

Asked about the Hamas position on the Fatah Movement calls for a comprehensive national dialogue, which Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi was assigned to conduct, Ghawshah said: After reading the results of Dr. 'Abd-al-Shafi's recent visit to Tunis, one feels the pessimism regarding the negative results achieved by his delegation. According to our estimates, these results had been expected.

Ghawshah added: The pragmatic Tunis leadership tried two months ago to send [Fatah Central Committee member] Hani al-Hasan to conduct a dialogue with the Palestinian opposition forces, but he did not succeed. Now Yasir 'Arafat is trying to send Dr. 'Abd-al-Shafi to carry out the same role played by Hani al-Hasan, particularly after the setting up of the APF.

Ghawshah urged Dr. 'Abd-al-Shafi not to embark on his mission, which is doomed to failure after his call for democratic reform fell on deaf ears. He urged 'Abd-al-Shafi to take the side of the popular Palestinian fold, now represented by the APF, which has clearly declared its forthcoming political tasks. Ghawshah added that meeting with 'Abd-al-Shafi and conducting dialogue with him depends on the approval of the 10 factions.

Islamic Jihad Leader on Gaza-Jericho Accord

TA1101133094 Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic 10 Jan 93 pp 1, 19

[Interview with Dr. Fathi al-Shaqaqi, general secretary of Islamic Jihad in Palestine, by Tahir Shuraytah; place and date not given]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] [Shuraytah] Why have you been refusing to meet with Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat]?

[Al-Shaqaqi] We believe that after the Oslo accord there is no longer any chance left for a meeting. There is no significance or benefit to such a meeting. As to why this meeting did not take place before the accord; the main reason is political. We have been witnessing a continuous retreat in the political position in return for nothing.

[Shuraytah] How do you envisage the future of the self-rule areas from the economic and political perspectives?

[Al-Shaqaqi] Israel has always tried to get rid of the Gaza Strip. The dream or idea of throwing Gaza into the sea is not Rabin's or Peres'. Since the fifties at least, it has been Ben-Gurion's dream and idea. In practice, the Gaza Strip was excluded from the Labor Party's platform. Even Shamir perceived Israel's problem to be the Gaza Strip and its inhabitants, not the Arabs as a whole. He said so in one of his statements a year before his party lost to Labor in the recent Knesset elections.

As for the West Bank, the picture is completely different. The strategic importance of its range of mountains, its location, its religious Jewish heritage, and the settlements in it will make withdrawal from it now or after five years more complicated. Therefore, I believe that there will be two different models of self-rule even if the accord is implemented. One in Gaza, and the other in the West Bank. In both cases, the Israelis will try their utmost to prevent this self-rule from being transformed into a Palestinian state. As for the economic aspect, according to the declaration of principles and our understanding of it, the self-rule area will remain tied to Israel's economy.

[Shuraytah] What effect will the Gaza-Jericho agreement have on Jordan? And what is the reason for Jordanian apprehension concerning this agreement?

[Al-Shaqaqi] On the surface it seems that Jordan is the biggest loser. Geopolitics does not permit the establishment of three entities between Iraq's western borders and the Mediterranean Sea. The setting up of some sort of an independent entity in Jericho, the rest of the West Bank, and Gaza will be at Jordan's expense and will lead to severe tension in Jordan as half the population there is Palestinian.

Since the agreement does not give the Palestinians anything and does not satisfy them, Jordan will remain the solution as the alternative Palestinian homeland.

If we take into account that the West and the Jews believe that since its inception Jordan's role has been to absorb the effects of the inauspicious Balfour Declaration, this role now seems to be in its latest stages in the wake of an agreement that has given most of Palestine to the Israelis. Moreover, Jordan not only fears losing its role in the region, but also fears disintegration. This fear is reflected in the alarming concessions at the talks with the Israelis. The agreement's Palestinian team is competing with Jordan in making concessions to acquire this role.

[Shuraytah] In the event that Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] participates in the self-rule elections, what will be your position in view of the fact that you will remain almost alone in confronting the current plan?

[Al-Shaqaqi] The brothers in Hamas have reiterated to us that they oppose and will boycott these elections and that their position on this matter is final and decisive. In any event, our own position stems from our principled commitment to our homeland, people, and nation. It also stems from our understanding and analysis of the conspiracy against Palestine, of the facts, and of the meaning of this inauspicious agreement in terms of forging an alliance with the enemy against the nation and the entire region.

Leader of Islamic Movement in Israel Interviewed

PM1101144094 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 8 Jan 94 p 5

[Interview with Ra'id Salah, mayor of Umm el Fahm and "main leader of the Islamic Movement" inside Israel, by Jamal Khashuqji in Jeddah; date not given]

[Excerpts] [Khashuqji] How was your visit to Saudi Arabia arranged and what are its aims?

[Salah] The purpose of the visit is to perform 'umrah [minor pilgrimage] with a delegation from the towns situated inside the Green Line (Israel). It was arranged in coordination with the Jordanian Awqaf Ministry. [passage omitted]

[Khashuqji] Let us move to politics. You have participated more than once in local Israeli elections. How were the results with regard to the Islamic tendency?

[Salah] Recent local government elections were held on 28 November 1993. The Islamic Movement participated in the elections in several cities and villages in the Arab areas, and with Almighty God's help, the movement was able to win the mayorship in Umm el Fahm, Kafr Qasim, Kafr Bara, Jaljuliya, and Kafr Qari'. It also secured good and satisfactory results—temporarily—in Kafr Kanna, Rahit [as transliterated], and some other areas in the city of 'Akko. [passage omitted]

[Khashuqji] Was the peace issue and the recent accord included in your election program, and were you forced to talk about it in front of your candidates?

[Salah] Actually our position as Muslims has always been clear vis-a-vis the peace issue. Our understanding of a real and just peace is part of Muslims' view in life. This is why we as Muslims always maintain this value and adopt it not as an empty slogan, but as a value of belief that has a truthful, realistic, comprehensive, and just substance.

[Khashuqji] Did you talk more clearly about the Gaza-Jericho agreement during the elections?

[Salah] Without doubt a position was adopted on this plan. The position was defined through the numerous questions we raised, which have received no responsible answer from any official party. For example, the Gaza-Jericho plan does not answer questions like: What about the fate of holy Jerusalem? No answer. There is no clear official position on this issue. Or about the fate of the Palestinian refugees made homeless in 1948 after their cities and villages were destroyed. [passage omitted]

[Khashuqji] But please allow me to ask you: Are you Palestinian or Israeli?

[Salah] I say it clearly and openly: I am a Palestinian Arab Muslim living on my land with no charity from anyone.

[Khashuqji] Have you been accused of sympathizing with Hamas?

[Salah] Yes, there are accusations by some quarters. But we have confirmed our clear and open position: We support Palestinians' rights wherever they are, whether in the West Bank or in the Gaza Strip or beyond these boundaries. Because we consider ourselves an integral part of this people, to whom we are bound by ties of blood, history, and religion. Without doubt this bond is fixed, permanent, and cannot be severed by anyone. So we do not deny our sympathizing and cohesion—and I am not just saying sympathizing, but also cohesion—with Palestinian legitimacy—the legitimacy of the Palestinian people, who have the full and natural right to establish their state and to cling to their capital, holy Jerusalem. We do not hesitate to express our cohesion in many situations. [passage omitted]

Entrepreneurs Announce Plan for 13 New Towns

TA1101152194 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1500 GMT 11 Jan 94

[Text] A group of Palestinian entrepreneurs calling itself Falastiyah announced in Jerusalem today a huge building plan to set up 13 towns in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip at a cost of $30 million. The entrepreneurs told a Jerusalem news conference that they intend to start work soon. The project is to build 10 towns on the West Bank, with 50,000 residents each, and another three in the Gaza Strip, with 250,000 inhabitants each.

Our economic affairs correspondent Menahem Friedman reports that the investors plan to convene an international conference in Jerusalem in April to be attended by official representatives from the United States and Russia, as well as Yasir 'Arafat, and Israel's prime minister and cabinet ministers, in order to disclose the sources which will fund the project and to recruit investors and donors.

Algeria

NDC Spokesman Briefs on Dialogue Process

Islamic Detainees To Be Released

LD1101182794 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 11 Jan 94

[Text] Two weeks before the holding of the national conference, the National Dialogue Commission [NDC] is about to embark on the drafting of the final version of the proposed document on the transition period. This follows a series of consultations and meetings with numerous parties, associations, and organizations. In this context, the NDC held a news conference at the El Mithak building in Algiers today. Over to Abdelmoumen Dekkar with this telephone dispatch:

[Dekkar] The meeting held between NDC rapporteur Abdelkader Bensalah and representatives of the national media this afternoon was aimed at assessing the dialogue process in its last stage which culminated in a series of multilateral meetings. These meetings are due to be concluded today with a meeting with professional and youth organizations. The end of the multilateral meetings does not mean that the door of the El Mithak building [NDC headquarters] will now be shut. On the contrary, consultations will continue between the NDC and its partners in the dialogue.

Bensalah said that regarding the subject of clearing the air and holding contacts with Islamic trends, the commission has received from the authorities concerned definite guarantees that a first batch of people will be released from detention centers in the south in the next few days. He added that the commission has received similar guarantees that house arrest orders will be lifted on all those to whom the decision applied.

The NDC rapporteur went on to say that these measures have been taken with a view to clearing the air, restoring people's peace of mind, and thus providing the best conditions to ensure the success of the national dialogue conference and achieve national consensus. He added that the commission hopes that this will be a major turning point toward the restoration of tranquillity and the gradual return of civil peace.

Talking about the pilot study undertaken in connection with the platform of dialogue and the reactions of some parties to this study, Bensalah indicated that the commission based its draft on the declaration of 1 November [1954], the 1989 Constitution, and the positions expressed by the parties to the dialogue either in writing or verbally during numerous meetings with the commission. He said that the document adopts the views repeated by most members and added that it was impossible to adopt the views of all sides at the same time and include them in a single document. The NDC rapporteur stated that this document is only, as its title indicates, a pilot study; all parts of it are open to enrichment, amendment, and revision, he asserted.

Regarding the position of the Socialist Forces Front, which has decided to boycott the national conference, Bensalah said that the commission heard of the front's position the same way everyone did and that it had not been notified officially. However, the rapporteur added, the commission stresses its desire to involve everyone and not to dismiss anyone. At this crucial period of its history, Algeria needs the effort, sacrifice, and magnanimity of all its children, particularly those who made huge sacrifices to enable Algeria to recover its sovereignty and dignity, he stated.

We will try to give you further details on the meeting between the NDC rapporteur and representatives of the national media in our subsequent news bulletins.

Further on Conference Issues

LD1101235994 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1930 GMT 11 Jan 94

[Statement by National Dialogue Commision spokesman Abdelkader Bensalah at a news conference in Algiers on 11 January—recorded]

[Excerpts] [Passage omitted] After having listened to all the parties in the dialogue, the National Dialogue Commission will remain in contact with them to consult them on several issues related to the contents of the platform and the national conference.

These clarifications do not prevent replies to a number of issues raised by the national press, citizens, or parties in the dialogue. Among these, we will mention the pilot study for the platform of dialogue with its contents. It has introduced clear amendments to the constitution, and in this the commission went beyond its powers.

The pilot study also included a chapter devoted to the economic, social, and security guidelines. In this chapter there were some people who said these were not enough. There were also those who said that by including these guidelines in the document, it means participation in issues that have a relationship with the social project.

Regarding the chapter on commitments, there were some people who said that it should remain unchanged, whereas some other people demanded there was a need to amend it. A third side raised the possibility of discarding it altogether. There were also those who demanded there was a need to drop the preamble because it came up with ideas close to the social project.

On this occasion the commission wishes to make the following clarifications:

The pilot study endeavored to go along with the spirit of the constitution. Those who drafted the pilot study never had an intention to amend the constitution. In the view of the commission, the constitution remains a basic reference document and the basic law that regulates the state's institutions. But the institutions of the transitional period and particularly the state presidency and the provisional national council are not elected. Therefore, they cannot occupy the same status of the republic presidency and the national people's assembly. Consequently, the powers of

the interim institutions have a special nature, a matter which necessitated they run under special rules.

This is on the one hand. On the other hand, in view of the seriousness of the multi-faceted crisis and the results of this crisis that prevent the literal implementation of the constitution, and in view of the inevitability that dictates on us the need to provide the maximum level of success to attain the aims of the interim stage to ensure a return to the electoral course, the commission believed in its drafting of the pilot study. The commission also believed the implementation of the chapters on regulating the powers governing the transitional stage so that they can provide the greatest possible extent of effectiveness—a matter that was misunderstood and regarded by some as an amendment to the constitution. In view of these considerations, the commission believes that this action on its part is in keeping with the constitution and not an amendment to the constitution.

Concerning the economic, social, and security objectives, the commission believes, on the basis of a request by the sides to the dialogue, that defining the economic, social, and security objectives is a requirement imposed by the reality of the transitional@period.

The government, whose objective is to restore the country to normal life and civilian peace, needs general directives from the conference that would clarify to it the landmarks on the road. This led the commission to devote a chapter to this matter.

The question of enriching and amending the contents of the chapters remains a valid point. This is a matter to be decided by the sides to the dialogue in the end. The question of the commitments was also raised by the commission, at the request of the sides to the dialogue. Its aim is to make the sides to the dialogue committed and obligated to one another and to public opinion on the need to respect the essence of these undertakings.

The commission did not come up with these commitments on its own accord, but it derived them particularly from the constitution and from the laws enforced in the country. We have made these clarifications in answer to some of the questions raised by some sides to the dialogue and quoted by the the press.

As the commission has promised you in the past, it is still continuing its efforts with the aim of involving these tendencies. Contacts were established during the past few months. These contacts are still continuing. However, because of the private and sensitive nature of these contacts, the commission apologizes for not providing more details about the issue. Whenever it realizes there is something worth informing the public opinion of, it will not hesitate to inform you.

We are a few days away from the convening of the national dialogue conference. To clear the air, restore tranquillity to the people, and consequently make available the best conditions for the success of the conference and achieve national accord, the commission reports that it has received definite guarantees from the authorities concerned that a first batch of people will be released from [detention] centers in the south in the next few days. Second, it has received definite guarantees that also in the next few days house arrest orders will be lifted with regard to all those to whom the measure applies. The commission hopes that these measures will constitute a major turning point in the path leading to the restoration of peace of mind and gradual return to civil peace.

The issue of participating in the national conference has been in the forefront of the national press for a few days. [passage omitted]

On the eve of holding the national conference, the commission sees that this is the time for closing ranks and uniting. At this time, those who love Algeria and those who want the reins of power will come to light. This is a test period, and history will certainly be the judge and arbitrator. Thank you.

FIS Leaders Abroad in Contact With Regime

PM1101130294 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 8 Jan 94 p 4

[Jamal Khasuqji report: "Anwar Haddam Tells AL-HAYAH: Contacts With Regime Stress Negotiation With Detained Leaders"]

[Excerpt] Anwar Haddam, member of the Algerian Islamic Salvation Front [FIS] Executive Committee abroad, has confirmed the existence of contacts between the Front's leaders inside and outside the country on the one hand and parties from the Algerian Government on the other. In a statement to AL-HAYAH he said that these contacts are designed to arrange direct contacts between the ruling authority and detained FIS leaders, specifically Shaykhs Abbassi Madani and Ali Belhadj.

Haddam added that all contacts ended with informing the various parties and brokers that "none of the FIS leaders can negotiate with the ruling clique separately, and the regime must recognize the Front's legitimate leadership and enable the detained shaykhs to meet with its shura council."

Haddam, who currently lives in the United States, heads the Front's parliamentary mission, and was elected in the canceled elections, pointed to the existence of other new parties "which should be taken account of when the negotiations begin, namely leaders of armed action."

A few weeks ago the Front announced its conditions for negotiation, not dialogue, as it prefers to call the process. These conditions included releasing the Front's leaders, enabling them to meet with the Front's shura council, and then holding negotiations in a neutral country.

Haddam also denounced what he termed "the ruling clique's attempts to divide the Front's leadership by contacting illegitimate elements who do not belong to the FIS line." He added: "The regime tried to divide the Front before following the 1991 June incidents. It also tried to create an alternative leadership to the Front but its scheme

failed, and any attempt to make contact with an illegitimate leadership is also doomed to fail." [passage omitted]

'Arafat Meets With Kafi, Concludes Visit

LD1101170894 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 11 Jan 94

[Text] Higher State Council [HCE] Chairman Ali Kafi received Abdelmalek Benhabyles, the chairman of the Constitutional Council, at the latter's request today. According to a Constitutional Council statement, Mr. Benhabyles conveyed a memorandum on proposals concerning the transitional period.

At the presidential palace today, the HCE chairman also received Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat, who is currently visiting Algeria, and the delegation accompanying him. After the meeting, the Palestinian president stated that he had briefed Mr. Kafi on the progress of the peace talks and the obstacles facing the Palestinians in their current discussions with the Israelis. President 'Arafat added that the Israelis are trying, through their maneuvers, to avoid the implementation of the agreement signed by the Palestinians and the Israelis to withdraw fully from Gaza and Jericho as a first step toward a full withdrawal from all the occupied territories and Jerusalem.

When the meeting was over President 'Arafat left Algiers at the conclusion of his brief visit.

Former Official Urges Participation in Talks

LD1101153894 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 1 Jan 94

[Text] Retired Colonel Ahmed Bencherif [former minister of irrigation and former member of National Liberation Front politburo] has called on everybody to take part in the national dialogue and, speaking at a news conference, he described those who reject dialogue as being unpatriotic. Amal Meddah attended this news conference:

[Meddah] Before that, I would like to inform you that following its recent meeting with the National Dialogue Commission [NDC] the Islamic Arab Rally held a news conference at the club of journalists and artists, at the radio station, this morning to inform public opinion about the proposals made by this party to the NDC. [Islamic Arab Rally leader] Ali Zeghdoud indicated that his party has detected a certain flexibility and moderation in the commission's position regarding other parties' views. He added that there was a development in the dialogue since everybody, the authorities and opposition alike, now believes in the dialogue and regards it as a means to come out of the crisis. We are, he said, advocates and supporters of dialogue.

As for retired Colonel Bencherif, he said: If they entrusted me with the responsibility, I would manage to resolve the debt problem within three months and I would find a solution to the security problem, since I was previously in charge of security [as commander of the Gendarmerie], within six months provided that they accepted all my conditions. He added: Between 1963 and 1979, Algeria experienced five violent convulsions, but it never went through the bloodshed it is going through now.

Bencherif seized this opportunity to ask [Higher State Council Chairman] Ali Kafi to release the political prisoners Abassi Madani [leader of the banned Islamic Salvation Front] and his colleagues. He also urged his friend Ait Ahmed [leader of the Socialist Forces Front; currently in Europe] to return to his country and participate in the dialogue. He also appealed to [FLN Secretary General] Mr. Mehri to attend the national conference and said in this respect: Anyone who does not take part in the dialogue is not a patriot.

HAMAS Urges 'Responsibility' To Be Accepted

LD1101215694 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 11 Jan 94

[Text] HAMAS [Islamic Society Movement] issued a statement in which it appealed to the Algerian people and all the sides in the opposition to shoulder the historic responsibility before God and before the nation.

In its appeal to the authority and the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) and other parties and forces, Hamas underlines the need to participate in ending bloodshed, the destruction of installations, the threatening of worshipers, and for the need to stop statements for scoring one-upmanship and for bargaining. All must work for restoring tranquillity and must safeguard the supreme interest of the homeland.

'Terrorist Group' Assassinates Governor

LD1101194994 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 11 Jan 94

[Text] We have just learned that the governor of Tissemsilt Province [about 200 km southwest of Algiers], Mr. Mohamed Belal, and the people accompanying him were assassinated by a terrorist group in the municipality of Youssoufia today. The official was on an inspection visit in the municipality.

Three Policemen Killed by Islamic Activists

LD1201084994 Paris France-Inter Radio Network in French 0800 GMT 12 Jan 94

[Text] In Algeria, following the killing of a governor yesterday, we have learned this morning that three policemen have been killed by Islamic activists who set up ambushes for them.

Egypt

Libya Hands Over Three Suspected Militants

NC1101223894 Paris AFP in English 2203 GMT 11 Jan 94

[Text] Cairo, Jan 11 (AFP)—Libya handed over three suspected Islamic militants to the Egyptian authorities on Tuesday [11 January], the AL-AKHBAR daily reported here in its Wednesday edition.

The newspaper said the three were "terrorist leaders" who had infiltrated into Libya, but did not give details of their arrest.

They were handed over at the al-Sallum border post and then transferred to Cairo, where they were due to be interrogated by the Egyptian security services, AL-AKHBAR said.

Meanwhile, the AL-AHRAM newspaper reported that Egyptian security forces had arrested 350 suspected Islamic militants, mostly in Upper Egypt, during operations in the past two weeks.

They seized nearly 700 firearms and more than 440 kilogrammes (968 pounds) of explosives, the daily said.

Suspected Islamic militants shot dead a police officer and his bodyguard in Asyut in southern Egypt on Monday.

It was the first killing of policemen this year, bringing to 97 the number of policemen killed since Islamic militants launched a violent anti-government campaign in March 1992.

In a speech broadcast on state television on Monday Libyan leader Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi branded Islamic militants as "traitors" working for the West.

Al-Qadhdhafi, who has taken a hard line against the rise of Islamic fundamentalism, said militants were "anti-Islamic, and working for the enemy, backed by Western intelligence ... and carrying out a dangerous plot against the Arab and Islamic nation."

Among other groups, the Libyan leader singled out the al-Jama'ah al-Islamiah and Tala'i' al-Fath, which are at the forefront of the campaign to oust the government of Egyptian President Husni Mubarak.

Omani Minister Meets Officials, Departs

Delivers Message to Mubarak

NC1101154194 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 11 Jan 94

[Text] President Husni Mubarak today received Yusuf Bin-'Alawi, Omani minister of state for foreign affairs, who conveyed to him a message from Sultan Qabus Bin-Sa'id. The meeting was attended by Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa, who said that the discussion dealt with the future moves in the Middle East and the Gulf region and the results of the recent conference of the Damascus Declaration foreign ministers.

Holds Talks With Musa

NC1101165494 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 11 Jan 94

[Text] Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa today held talks with Yusuf al-'Alawi, Omani minister of state for foreign affairs, who stated that they exchanged views on issues of interest to both countries. He said they agreed to continue consultations on coordination between Egypt and Oman on issues of interest to them. He emphasized that there is an identity of views between Egypt and Oman on the various issues.

The Omani minister added that they had also discussed the peace process, particularly the multilateral negotiations and the future of these negotiations. He said that Oman supports efforts to enhance Arab solidarity.

Foreign Minister Musa stated that the conference of the Damascus Declaration foreign ministers expressed the positions of the participating countries on current problems. He said that his meeting with al-'Alawi today was a follow-up to what took place in Damascus. They also discussed the Arab situation and bilateral relations, and exchanged views on the peace process, particularly on the bilateral and multilateral tracks, he said.

Departs Cairo After Talks

NC1201095494 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 0900 GMT 12 Jan 94

[Text] Yusuf Bin-'Alawi Bin-'Abdallah, Omani minister of state for foreign affairs, left Cairo this morning following a two-day visit during which he met President Muhammad Husni Mubarak. He also held talks with Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa on ways to implement the recommendations of the Damascus Declaration foreign ministers' meeting, the general Arab situation, and ways of boosting the peace process.

The Egyptian and Omani officials also discussed ways of promoting bilateral ties.

Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa saw the Omani minister off at the airport.

Awqaf Minister Addresses University Meetings

Urges Students To Confront 'Terrorism'

NC1101150994 Cairo AL-AKHBAR in Arabic 6 Jan 94 p 6

[Report by Muhsin Jud and 'Abd-al-Nasir Karrar from Qina]

[Text] Awqaf Minister Muhammad 'Ali Mahjub has affirmed that Egypt's progress and prosperity depend on the strength of its internal front. He called on the youth to confront those people who advocate terrorism, whose hearts have been destroyed by hatred, and who are working to spread corruption and crime in Egypt in the name of religion, which is innocent of such crimes. He said such people have harmed Islam. Nevertheless, the doors of the state are still open for all those who have been misguided to return to their senses once again and join the Egyptian youth who are fighting for the future.

This was stated at the large student conference held at Qina University yesterday on the occasion of the opening of the university's cultural season. The conference was attended by Yahya al-Bahansawi, the governor of Qina, and some governorate figures. The minister added that the Governorate of Qina has destroyed its image due to a small

alien minority which does not belong to it. Historically, Qina has always been known as a country of science, writers, and intellectuals.

Major General al-Bahansawi, the governor of Qina, announced that the state, despite its difficult economic circumstances and the sufferings it is going through due to the many development projects it is undertaking, has, nevertheless, provided a great deal of support and potential for Upper Egypt to decrease the suffering of its youth and help them lead their lives in a human fashion. Qina is second among the governorates as regards the allocation of employment projects for youths. The governor added that 2,392 popular mosques in Qina have been included under the ministry. These mosques have also been provided with imams who are qualified Islamically, intellectually, and spiritually. In addition, 2.5 million Egyptian pounds have been allocated to maintain, repair, and renovate the rest of the mosques in the governorate. Also, 2.25 million pounds were allocated to establish the mosques of al- Hujayrat and al-Humaydat—the two towns of terrorism—and to refurbish and renovate the famous archaeological mosque in the governorate, the mosque of 'Abd-al-Rahim al-Qina'i. The minister of awqaf also approved the allocation of 750,000 pounds to build a mosque at Qina University. The founding stone of this mosque was laid yesterday and it will be called the mosque of Martyr Major General 'Abd-al-Hamid Ghubarah, the assistant Qina security chief who was martyred by terrorists.

Urges Arab, Islamic Unity

NC1101191994 Cairo MENA in English 1628 GMT 11 Jan 94

[Text] Cairo, Jan 11 (MENA)—The Minister of Awqaf (religious endowments) Dr. Muhammad 'Ali Mahjub today urged that efforts should be made to restore Arab and Islamic unity and solidarity and renounce all differences so that the nation may regain its unity and take its rightful place under the new world order.

The minister, who was addressing a cultural meeting at 'Ayn Shams university, said the restoration of al-Aqsa mosque was a most important issue which should receive the attention of the Islamic world.

He pointed out that the al-Aqsa mosque remained under the protection of the Islamic world for long centuries within the framework of the brotherhood of mankind away from fanaticism and bloodshed.

Egypt's Islamic affiliation is an undisputed fact, the minister said.

Egypt has across history been the guardian and protector of the teaching of Islam.

The minister said that not a single law was issued in the (?reign) of President Husni Mubarak which was contrary to Shari'ah (Islamic law).

Any attempt to undermine Egypt's position and its pioneering role in the world was doomed to failure, the minister of awqaf said.

Coptic Pope on Vatican, Dialogue, West

NC1101170794 Cairo AL-MUSAWWAR in Arabic 7 Jan 94 pp 24-26

[Interview with Pope Shanudah, pastor of the Coptic Church in Egypt, by Sana' al-Sa'id; place and date not given]

[Excerpts] [Al-Sa'id] How do you view the Vatican's establishment of diplomatic relations with Israel, which means a historic reconciliation between Christianity and Judaism?

[Shanudah] Do not forget that the Vatican represents a state, not just a church. The Vatican pope is a head of state and head of a church, and he has ambassadors in foreign countries. This, therefore, is not a reconciliation between Christians and Jews. The Vatican pope represents only the Catholics. All the others—Orthodox, Protestant, and Anglican churches—are not associated with this policy and have nothing to do with it. As for us, our dispute with the Jews is known. [passage omitted]

[Al-Sa'id] What about reports that Coptic tourists have begun visiting Jerusalem? This contradicts your declared position that there will be no pilgrimage to Jerusalem before peace prevails and Israel pulls out of the occupied Arab territories.

[Shanudah] We still adhere to our declared position. We will not go to Jerusalem unless we all go together. Reports about Coptic pilgrims in Jerusalem are untrue and merely propaganda. We still ban travel to Jerusalem. [passage omitted]

[Al-Sa'id] Do you fear the growing extremism and violence by some individuals in the country?

[Shanudah] We fear no one but God. And we even want to move from fearing God to loving Him. When we love God, we will not be linked to Him with feelings of fear. We want all people to be religious, but not extremists or fanatics.

[Al-Sa'id] In light of the current call for a national dialogue, is there a real possibility for an Islamic-Christian dialogue?

[Shanudah] The Islamic-Christian dialogue should keep away from creeds and focus on cooperation between Muslims and Christians in all fields without discussing differences of faith and creed. This will help people keep their love for each other.

[Al-Sa'id] What is the truth in saying that the Coptic Church is emotionally inclined toward the West, especially the United State, perhaps because they have the same religion?

[Shanudah] Common religion does not mean common policy. There are many Islamic countries, each with its own policy, and the same applies to Christian states. [passage omitted]

Another point: You may speak of a common religion, but there is more than one sect. While the Copts are orthodox,

the majority of Westerners are either Protestants or Catholics. So, there is a sectarian difference that may cause a conflict between the two sides, especially since we know that foreign missionaries have come to Egypt and tried to convert the Copts by various means and ways. I wonder what emotional inclination you mean in your question, and toward which Western countries?

[Al-Sa'id] The United States. This may be because it is the most powerful.

[Shanudah] It is known that the United States supports the Jews, and our policy toward the Jews is known. Support for the Jews is something no one accepts at all. This support in itself indicates that differences in religion do not affect policymaking. The Americans and the Jews have different religions, but they are politically in agreement. [passage omitted]

Libya

Report on U.S. 'Plan' To Topple al-Qadhdhafi

NC1101081694 Cairo AL-SHA'B in Arabic 7 Jan 94 pp 1, 7

[Report by Mahmud Bakri]

[Text] The Clinton administration has prepared a plan to overthrow Libyan revolution leader Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi before the middle of this year. Washington began contacts with European countries and rebels in south Sudan to implement a scheme to separate south Sudan from north Sudan and create an African state to protect U.S. and European interests in the Horn of Africa.

President Bill Clinton asked the National Security Council to prepare a new plan to overthrow Libyan leader Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi's regime to replace the plan that the CIA failed to implement last year. Sources reported that the new plan, which the U.S. National Security Council wants to implement before the middle of this year, focuses on the following factors:

1. Gathering the Libyan opposition forces in various parts of the world and agreeing with them on the "Salvation and Purge" plan as they call it.

2. Tasking U.S. ambassadors in various countries to meet Libyan opposition forces and discuss their requests for necessary funds and arms to implement the plan.

3. Asking particular Libyan opposition figures to hold contacts inside Libya with particular Libyan military commands qualified to participate in implementing the plan.

4. Agreeing with a country neighboring Libya to act as the assembly and staging point to carry out the plan.

5. Contacting particular European governments and agencies to participate in military and financial funding to implement the plan.

Sources asserted that a U.S. National Security Council team will meet figures who call themselves Libyan opposition leaders in Washington in the next few weeks. These figures have received invitations to visit Washington for this purpose.

A meeting was held in Washington with Sudanese rebels from south Sudan to prepare a plan. Washington bases its new plan against fraternal Sudan on the "Washington declaration" of last October. The U.S. Administration, which approves the secession of south Sudan, arranged this declaration for particular south Sudanese rebels. The new U.S. plan aims to incite the south Sudanese people to broaden their political and economic demands if the Sudanese Government insists on continuing the negotiations to solve the problem of south Sudan. The southerners will then escalate military operations in a bid to avoid Arab and African opposition to the establishment of a state in south Sudan and to convince African and Arab countries that a state in the south was established after negotiations with the Sudanese Government failed. The sources pointed out that Washington expressed a readiness for military intervention in favor of the southerners to implement the U.S. plan.

JANA Answers Report of Trade Union Disbandment

LD1101174794 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 1415 GMT 11 Jan 94

[Text] Tripoli, 11 Jan (JANA)—The Voice of America [VOA] has broadcast a report that Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi has decided to disband the Libyan General Federation of Trade Unions; the report was unfounded and categorically untrue.

JANA's local affairs editor has, however, commented on this matter saying: First of all, Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi is not a head of state or a prime minister who can take such a decision; the power in Libya is, in accordance with the Jamahiri system, in the hands of the people, who exercise legislative, management, and executive powers through people's congresses and people's committees.

Second, as far as the reorganization of the General Federation of Trade and Vocational Unions of the Great Jamahiriyah is concerned, this was done within the framework of the restructuring of the General Congress of Trade Unions in a bid to give fresh momentum and to consolidate trade union traditions within the framework of the restructuring of the people's congresses, in order to allow workers, as well as their own trade union bodies, to evaluate their affairs as well as the Great Jamahiriyah's foreign and local policies.

Third, the General Federation of Trade and Vocational Unions has been playing its role at Arab and international levels; it took part in the meetings of the central council of the International Federation of Arab Trade Unions in Damascus last month, and it is currently taking part in the proceedings of the International Federation of Arab Workers in Tunis.

Fourth, workers in the Great Jamahiriyah, who have been freed from wage slavery and the nightmare fear of the employer—be it an individual or a state—as a result of the revolution of producers of 1979, have become partners in management and production. Thus, they have achieved more than anybody else, who might not be able to achieve the same thing for years to come. [sentence as received]

Mauritania

UN Envoy Meets With President Taya, Departs

LD0901095394 Nouakchott ORTM Radio in Arabic 2300 GMT 8 Jan 94

[Excerpts] Yaqub Khan, special envoy of the UN secretary general, left the capital this afternoon at the end of his 24-hour visit to our country. [passage omitted]

Yaqub Khan was received at noon today by President Maaouiya Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya. [passage omitted]

After the meeting, the UN official made a statement to our colleague Dada Abdallah in which he said that he was honored to meet the president to whom he conveyed the greetings of the UN secretary general. He added that the aim of his visit to our country was to give impetus to the efforts being made to solve the Western Saharan problem which has now reached a critical stage, and these efforts require continuous consultation with the states concerned.

At the same time he praised the support which our country continues to give to the United Nations in finding a just and peaceful solution to this problem. [passage omitted]

Sudan

Al-Bashir Urges Committee To Talk to Rebels

EA1101191094 Omdurman National Unity Radio in Arabic 1315 GMT 11 Jan 94

[Text] Lieutenant General 'Umar al-Bashir, chairman of the Republic, has reaffirmed the necessity of official and popular concerted efforts to arrive at a comprehensive and just peace that satisfied all sides. This came during his meeting with Mr. (Jwang Toj), governor of Upper Nile State.

The governor stated that Lt. Gen. al-Bashir emphasized the necessity of forming a higher committee to push the efforts of dialogue with the factions of the rebel movement from inside the country, under the chairmanship of Muhammad al-Amin Khalifah, speaker of the Transitional National Assembly, and with governors of southern states as members, with the aim of contacting the various factions of the rebel movement and persuading them to sit at the table of negotiation and dialogue to achieve peace.

He said he briefed Lt. Gen. al-Bashir on security and economic conditions and stages of forming the political system. Mr. (Jwang Toj) confirmed the Upper Nile State masses' stand with and support for the internal peace efforts, considering that they are the basic pillar for achieving a just peace.

It is worth mentioning that a group from the leaderships of the unified rebel movement in Fangak area, in Upper Nile State, had surrendered its weapons to the Armed Forces and expressed its desire to hold negotiations with the state's authorities to end the war and lead the march of development.

TNA Speaker: United Factions Cease Fighting

EA1101192194 Omdurman National Unity Radio in Arabic 1315 GMT 11 Jan 94

[Excerpt] Mr. Muhammad al-Amin Khalifah, speaker of the Transitional National Assembly, has declared that peace is near, pointing out the necessity of making preparations for it and following it through. This came in the enlightenment which his excellency presented at the assembly's session today about a parliamentary delegation's visit to the Upper Nile State.

Muhammad al-Amin Khalifah explained that the brothers, who were bearing arms, reached the firm conviction of the inevitability of the halting of the war and saw that the war should come to an end. He said he met a number of the leaderships of the united factions of the rebel movement in the Fangak area, who confirmed their decision to stop the fighting and formulate peace and lead the march of construction and development. [passage omitted]

Al-Turabi Denies Link Between Regime, NIF

PM1101165094 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 11 Jan 94 p pp 1, 4

[Report by 'Umar Muhammad al-Hasan and Ahmad 'Uthman Jibril: "Al-Turabi Swears That Front Has Nothing To Do With Sudanese Regime"]

[Text] Khartoum—Dr. Hasan al-Turabi, leader of the Sudanese National Islamic Front [NIF], swore to reporters yesterday that his Front has nothing to do with the present Sudanese regime.

In a news conference held in the premises of the government-controlled Sudanese News Agency in Khartoum yesterday, al-Turabi said: "You know I am not a liar. I swear that the NIF, which is called a national front, does not exist as an organization in the regime at present, either secretly or publicly."

Answering a question put by AL-HAYAH, he revealed that a reconciliation is being conducted between "the ruling authority and the popular groups." He said that leaders of the Sudanese parties are excluded from this reconciliation, pointing out that "the government always has opened its doors to anyone who joined the salvation efforts to rescue the country from its past predicament."

Al-Turabi also revealed that he is making contacts with several quarters before traveling to Afghanistan in a bid to achieve reconciliation among the parties to the conflict in Kabul.

He pointed out that among these quarters are the Islamic Salvation Front in Algeria and several European states, including France.

Commenting on the expulsion of British Ambassador Peter Streams from Sudan, he said: "A number of Western ambassadors to Khartoum told me that Ambassador Streams used to vehemently attack Sudan in their meetings. And perhaps the government was very patient with him. But it is completely unacceptable for him to insult it to the point of forcing Sudan's guest (Archbishop of Canterbury George Carey) to enter the country by the back door." He went on: "Britain has realized the mistake of its ambassador and that of the archbishop of Canterbury."

IMF Mission Holds Talks With Finance Official

EA1101203094 Omdurman National Unity Radio in Arabic 1315 GMT 11 Jan 94

[Text] A mission of the International Monetary Fund has held its first meeting with the Sudanese side headed by Dr. Muhammad Khyar al-Zubayr, minister of state at the Ministry of Economic Planning and Investment.

The meeting reviewed economic performance and the national and financial product, rates of growth, and the performance of the general budget.

Muhammad Khayr al-Zubayr explained that the mission will continue its meetings with the finance minister and the governor of the Bank of Sudan.

Kuwait

Bill Exempting Ministers From Trial Fails To Pass

LD1101222194 Kuwait KSC Television in Arabic 1800 GMT 11 Jan 94

[Excerpt] The National Assembly held an ordinary session this morning under the chairmanship of assembly speaker Ahmad 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Sa'dun. The assembly examined at this session the report of the committee for legal and legislative affairs on the government's draft law, Number 25 of 1990, on the trial of ministers [which would exempt ministers from being brought to trial]. The assembly decided not to pass the draft law. [passage omitted]

Oman

Reasons for Libyan Minister's Visit Discussed

94AE0059A London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 5 Jan 94 p 4

[Unattributed article from Muscat: "Muscat: Al-Bishari Gives Bin-'Alawi Letter from Libyan Leadership; Attempt To Restore Diplomatic Relations Expected"]

[Text] Omani Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Mr. Yusuf Bin-'Alawi Bin-'Abdallah yesterday received Mr. Ibrahim al-Bishari, Libya's Permanent Representative to the Arab League and Coordinator of Relations with Egypt, who gave him a handwritten letter from the Libyan Foreign Ministry.

Informed sources told AL-HAYAH that al-Bishari and the Omani official discussed developments in the Lockerbie crisis between Libya and Western countries, the current Arab situation, and bilateral relations.

The sources noted that the Libyan visits and messages ho Muscat, which ceased about one year ago, had recently resumed despite the limited relations between the two countries since the Lockerbie crisis and Libya's quest for the mediation of moderate Arab contries such as Oman, the Gulf states, and Egypt, to avoid an unequal confrontation with Western countries and reach a political solution to the crisis.

Although Oman has avoided commenting on the crisis itself, it has expressed, in a cautious and indirect manner, its reservations about the sanctions imposed on the "Libyan people." Mr. Yusuf Bin-'Alawi told AL-HAYAH, when the international sanctions were first imposed on Libya, that it was the Libyan people who would suffer from the boycott.

However, according to diplomatic sources in Muscat, Oman is not expected to play an active role in mediation efforts between Libyan and the West, not only because it may see a "realistic" chance for solving the Lockerbie crisis only through acceptance and implementation of the UN resolutions, but also because bilateral relations with Libya remain limited, and were until recently impaired by a certain distrust due to differing political stances during the 1970's and 1980's.

These sources believe that the Libyan envoy, who was once foreign minister, may have sought to move bilateral relations towards the resumption of diplomatic relations between the two countries. Libya is currently the only Arab country with which Muscat does not have diplomatic relations.

Among the things the Omanis may be interested in knowing is how far Libya would go in opposing the Palestinian-Israeli peace agreement on autonomy in Gaza and Jericho. The Sultanate enthusiastically supports the agreement and has sought to support it both in the Gulf region and the Arab world, after Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat's visit to Muscat directly after the agreement was reached.

Diplomatic sources say that the message that Libya has received from other Arab parties—that actual opposition engaged in by the Libyan Government to obstruct the Palestinian-Israeli agreement "could be an additional factor complicating chances to solve the Lockerbie crisis politically, and exposing Libya to new difficulties"—might be the same thing al-Bishari is hearing in his meetings with Omani officials during his visit, which ends today.

Unlike many subjects, Libya's and Oman's views on the current state of Arab relations are close. They both affirm the need for starting a new chapter in these relations and getting out of the rut of the Gulf crisis, including opening the door to Iraq's return, as long as it obeys the UN resolutions.

Qatar

Foreign Minister Meets Iraqi Counterpart

JN1101155494 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 11 Jan 94

[Text] Qatari Foreign Minister Hamad Bin-Jasim Bin-Jabr Al Thani has received a letter from Iraqi Foreign Minister Muhammad Sa'id al-Sahhaf dealing with the current situation in the region, as well as relations between the two fraternal countries. The Iraqi ambassador in Doha handed the message to the Qatari foreign minister today.

Saudi Arabia

King Fahd Receives Message From Moroccan King

LD1101152594 Riyadh Saudi Arabian Kingdom Radio Network in Arabic 1430 GMT 11 Jan 94

[Excerpt] King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud, custodian of the two holy mosques, has received a letter from his brother His Majesty King Hassan II of Morocco. The letter was handed to the custodian of the two holy mosques by Moroccan Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Abdelkebir Alaoui M'Daghri when he was received by the King at his office in al-Yamamah Palace today. [passage omitted]

Yemen

Committee Agrees on Measures To End Crisis

JN1201083994 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 12 Jan 94 p 10

[Excerpt] Sanaa (Agencies)—Yemen's rival factions have agreed to military and political measures they hope will end a crisis that has paralysed the government and plunged the troubled economy into a deeper slump, party sources said Tuesday.

They said a 27-man "national dialogue committee" entrusted with resolving differences between the northern president and his deputy, a southerner, agreed on the measures in Aden late on Monday.

The sources said the measures appeared to go some way towards appeasing the Aden-based Yemen Socialist Party (YSP) of Vice-President 'Ali Salim al-Bid, who has stayed away from the capital Sanaa since July amid fears that the 1990 merger between North and South Yemen may be threatened.

The accord calls for the withdrawal of troops and military encampments from major Yemeni cities and the arrest of Yemenis suspected of involvement in a spate of political killings.

The YSP, which is unified Yemen's second largest party and ruled the former Marxist South Yemen before the merger, says at least 150 of its members have been assassinated in the past few months—the latest was a pro-YSP tribal leader killed on Friday in Sanaa.

The sources said the accord also meets a key YSP demand for the central bank to come under the authority of the government headed by the YSP's Haydar Abu Bakr al-Attas. It has so far been under President 'Ali Abdallah Salih, a conservative who ruled North Yemen until the merger. The YSP earlier rejected reconciliation with Mr. Salih and his General People's Congress (GPC), impoverished Yemen's largest party, unless steps were taken to implement its 18 demands.

Southern sources say the YSP would not be satisfied with promises and wanted to see concrete actions before ending its boycott of Mr. Salih. It says the two sides had in the past reached several accords which were never implemented.

The three parties in the ruling coalition—the YSP, GPC and the Islamist Islah—have been meeting with other Yemeni politicians in Aden for the past 10 days after holding several sessions of the commitee in the north.

Each of the three parties has five members. The committee also includes five opposition representatives and seven of the country's leading figures such as former presidents.

The sources said that among other points agreed were government spending cuts, anti-corruption measures and some decentralisation measures that would reduce the power of the central government in Sanaa. It was also agreed that a date be set for local elections after last year's first democratic general elections. [passage omitted]

YSP Denies Undermining Unity

JN1201064294 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 0600 GMT 12 Jan 94

[Text] According to Yemeni political sources, rival Yemeni parties have reached an agreement on political and military measures to put an end to the crisis which has paralyzed the Yemeni Government. It has been learned that a 27-member national dialogue committee has been set up to settle the differences between Yemeni President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih and Vice President 'Ali Salim al-Bid, head of the Yemeni Socialist Party [YSP], with which Prime Minister Haydar Abu-Bakr al-'Attas is affiliated.

The YSP denied charges it attributed to Yemeni President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih that southern Yemeni leaders are seeking to undermine Yemeni unity through a conspiracy with Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. In a statement, the YSP affirmed that it will continue its firm course to improve Yemen's relations with its neighbors and halt all practices and reactions that harm Yemen's relations with its neighbors and prevent the promotion of these relations.

Salih Urges Fighting All 'Kinds of Sabotage'

JN1101211094 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 2000 GMT 11 Jan 94

[Text] Brother Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, chairman of the Presidential Council, met at the Presidential Palace in Ta'izz today with the brother representatives of the expanded popular gathering comprising the sons of the al-Hudaydah Governorate. They briefed the brother president on the results of the conference, which expressed the concerns of the governorate's sons and their aspirations. The conference also stressed the sons' eagerness to preserve unity, democracy, and political pluralism, and called on the leadership to adhere to responsible and serious dialogue in order to end the political crisis that the country is passing through. This crisis has damaged the people's national interests, led by Yemeni unity, and inflicted various forms of economic, social, and psychological suffering on each Yemeni citizen.

They also briefed the president on the aspirations and demands of the governorate's sons for accomplishing many service projects to raise the standard of living in the governorate's areas.

The president addressed the representatives of the popular gathering, which included their eminence the ulema as well as businessmen, social figures, and representatives of political organizations and parties, shaykhs, and youths. He profoundly welcomed them, and highly praised the national sentiments shown by the governorate's sons who expressed their national eagerness to safeguard the Yemeni unity. He also blessed the results of the expanded gathering of the sons of the al-Hudaydah Governorate.

The president reviewed the aspects of the suffering that the Yemeni citizens are passing through as a result of this crisis. He regretted the negative results of this crisis, which were reflected on the community's situation and citizens' life. He said: These results also cracked the community

and created an atmosphere for the enemies of unity and democracy, so they may express their grudge against this national achievement that was realized on the glorious 22 May 1990. This achievement is a source of pride for us in the Yemeni homeland and an accomplishment for all Arab unionists and the masses of our Arab and Islamic nation. It also showed us on the international level as giants. However, the enemies of unity and democracy have pooled their resources and efforts to undermine our unity and fragment the one Yemeni family.

The brother president added: We are pleased with meeting with the brother sons of the al-Hudaydah governorate, whether ulema, merchants, social figures, or representatives of political organizations and parties, whose initiative embodied their care for national accord. Together, and hand in hand, we will do our best to safeguard unity and democracy, our rescue ship in a violent storm.

Salih said: Unity is based on firm pillars, and we must not abandon these pillars. We have tolerated a great deal for the sake of unity in order to rob those who want to exacerbate differences the opportunity of doing so. In order to lead our country away from internecine struggles, we made many concessions in order to preserve unity out of goodwill and out of our sense of national responsibility and so that our people will not face unnecessary difficulties. However, regrettably, some today are trying to foment troubles in society and harden the people's life by escalating this crisis, whose causes and origin are known to our people and which led to the deterioration of our economic conditions and reflected on the general situation in the country.

He said: On 22 May 1990, we announced that all the files of the past were closed, and we decided to open a new page in the march of national construction so that all energies would be mobilized to building the new Yemen. However, some are still tied to the past and are thinking in the same old way. They have not gotten rid of this wrong view of things and have endeavored to foment struggles in society under many names, using sugar-coated words.

Salih noted that some of the practices have harmed unity, such as instigating parochialism, sectarianism, and narrow affiliations. He said: We always ask our people to owe allegiance to God, the homeland, the revolution, and unity and to unite in facing the sectarian hatreds that harm our national unity. He said: Enough tampering with the national economy, enough corruption, enough irresponsibility that leads to social anarchy like the situation of 9 and 10 December 1992. This is unacceptable, and we will not tolerate it. We will fight all kinds of economic, security, and all other kinds of sabotage. The security authorities have been given instructions not to tolerate or be lenient with any saboteurs who practice violence, sabotage, and anarchy, threatening safety and stability in our society.

The brother chairman reviewed many developments in our society and noted that unity was realized on the basis of dialogue and equality, without a victor or vanquished and was not an annexation. We are all sons of the same people with equal rights and duties.

Salih said: We believed in democracy and held elections, letting the ballot boxes be our arbiters. We must accept the results. It is in the nature of democracy and pluralism that some parties emerge victorious and others defeated. However, some do not accept democracy and work against it if it does not work in his interests. He said: We reject all forms of violence, are against political and mental terror, and oppose all kinds of sabotage. We support dialogue and respect free opinion and the opinion of others, and we will extend our hand to all those in favor of union in order to build new Yemen, a democratic, united, secure, and peaceful Yemen.

The meeting was attended by a number of officials accompanying the bother chairman.

Attacks Attempts to Undermine Unity

JN1201075294 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 2000 GMT 11 Jan 93

[Text] Brother Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, chairman of the Presidential Council, met in Ta'izz today with brother representatives of the youth sector and women leaders in the governorate. He discussed with them a number of national issues and concerns related to democratic practices, and stressed the principle of political pluralism and respect for others' opinions.

During this meeting, the brother chairman spoke about our country's current political crisis and the efforts being made to find national solutions for the crisis to maintain the homeland's unity and the people's cohesion. He hoped that this meeting will be a new start for responsible and serious political action by members of the General People's Congress [GPC] and other national political forces to close ranks and confront the forces that tirelessly try to undermine the people's gains and the homeland's unity. He said that responsible political action requires everyone to work amid the masses, adopt their concerns, contribute toward tackling their issues, and embody their aspirations for the building of the modern Yemeni state, the state of law and order. He said that everyone should work to serve the country's well-being and progress, rather than to be involved in one-upmanship and cheap gains at the expense of values, principles, and national objectives and constants.

The brother chairman noted the importance of intensifying political activity and democratic practices and confronting the hostile propaganda which is aimed at breaking the social cohesion and undermining the homeland's unity. He said that unity is a great achievement for the sake of which our people have offered the dearest sacrifices. He said: We should move faster to bolster the march that we have started since the establishment of the GPC. This march is full of major achievements on all development and national levels, culminating in the great unity.

Addressing attendees, the brother chairman said: We should counter the biased propaganda with objective facts and tangible achievements. You should discuss frankly and objectively all aspects of corruption and counter

laxity, carelessness, and all backward practices that harm the homeland's march and progress.

Arms Rumors Attempt To 'Poison' Dialogue Effort

PM1101164694 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 11 Jan 94 pp1, 4

[Reports by 'Abdallah Hammudah and Hammud Munsir in Sanaa and Lutfi Shatarah in Aden: "Yemen: Accusations of Arms Imports and Controversy Over Dialogue"]

[Excerpts] The Yemeni General People's Congress [GPC] and the Yemeni Socialist Party [YSP] have exchanged accusations about military deals under which arms and ammunition have been delivered to each. GPC sources said yesterday that a military transport plane arrived in Aden the night before last and again last night and was parked in the military section of the airport where it unloaded its cargo, and that a cargo ship was anchored at some distance from the coast and its cargo was being transported to the shore by small cargo boats.

In reply, a YSP spokesman said that these "rumors are part of a campaign to poison the dialogue atmosphere and distort the YSP's efforts to end the country's crisis." He added that the aim "is to conceal the military movements of the other party which has intensified its arms import operations through Djibouti to al-Mukha port."

This comes as the "National Dialogue Committee for resolving the Yemeni crisis" is preparing to announce the results achieved today. Observers fear that the committee may have reached a dead end after weeks of discussions in Sanaa and Aden despite the fact that a subcommittee has redrafted the final paper on the basis for building the state, combining the proposals approved by the members of the tripartite ruling coalition (the GPC, the YSP, and the Yemeni Reform Grouping [YRG]), in addition to the opposition's National Bloc. [passage omitted]

Dialogue Committee sources have expressed pessimism about the possibility of finding solutions acceptable to all parties because of the sensitive nature of the YSP's demands. They added that if no such solutions are achieved then the committee would divulge to the Yemeni people all the phases it passed through, reveal the secret issues, and expose the party which caused the failure of the dialogue. Other sources, however, are optimistic. They say that matters were proceeding "contrary to people's expectations." They emphasized that if the proposals—which are opposed by the GPC and the YRG—are approved then the leaders of the parties would be called to an urgent meeting to sign the agreement documents which would include formation of a government of national accord to implement what was agreed and to prepare for new elections within a period not exceeding two years. [passage omitted]

Salih, al-Bid Talk to Arab League Chief

JN1101204194 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 2000 GMT 11 Jan 94

[Text] Brother Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, chairman of the Presidential Council, today received a telephone call from brother Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, secretary general of the Arab League, who called to reassure himself about developments in our country. The brother Arab League secretary general expressed the league's readiness to try to help bring views closer together, enabling our country to overcome the challenges facing it as a result of the continuation of the current political crisis and safeguarding Yemen's unity, which constitutes a gain for the sons of the Arab nation.

Brother 'Ali Salim al-Bid, vice chairman of the Presidential Council, also received a telephone call today from brother Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, secretary general of the Arab League, who told the vice chairman of the Presidential Council that the Arab League was ready to exert every effort to bring views close together and help our country overcome the current political crisis and find solutions to its issues and problems in order to enable our country to preserve unity, democracy, and stability. He also stressed that Yemen's unity, which was achieved on 22 May 1990, is considered a pan-Arab gain in which all the sons of the Arab nation take pride. The Presidential Council vice chairman expressed his appreciation for the Arab League's eagerness to help our country overcome the crisis and the obstacles facing it.

Al-Bid, al-'Attas Meet With U.S. Envoy

JN1101205094 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 200 GMT 11 Jan 94

[Text] Brother 'Ali Salim al-Bid, Presidential Council vice chairman, received U.S. Ambassador Arthur Hughes in Aden today. They discussed ties of cooperation and means to improve them. They also exchanged views on current developments and the efforts to end the crisis and find practical solutions to the issues and problems facing the march of development to protect unity and strengthen the democratic march in our country.

Brother 'Ali Salim al-Bid, Presidential Council vice chairman, voiced his appreciation for the United States' interest in helping our country to overcome the crisis and find solutions to developmental issues and problems. He praised the bilateral ties and said he hoped for further progress and improvement.

Brother Prime Minister Haydar Abu-Bakr al-'Attas today received U.S. Ambassador Arthur Hughes in Aden, the country's trade and economic capital. They discussed ties of cooperation between the two countries and prospects for their development. They also discussed current developments in the Yemeni political crisis.

Former PDRY President Urges Dialogue

PM1201092994 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 11 Jan 94 p5

[Appeal issued by former South Yemen President 'Ali Nasir Muhammad from Damascus on 10 January]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate, I appeal to the Yemeni masses and armed forces:

Since the beginning of the current crisis we have been following the escalating developments with extreme concern. We had hoped that the efforts of the sincere sons of Yemen would be pooled to produce a solution and a way out of the stifling crisis which has taken hold at all levels. We have followed the efforts of the good Yemeni men and leaders from the various political forces as well as the efforts of the brothers and friends to promote a solution that would safeguard Yemen, its unity, and its democracy and spare Yemen and its people entry into a dark tunnel with no known end and a catastrophe the dimensions of which only almighty God would know.

We have always pointed out that a lack of a comprehensive strategic vision for the post-unity era would certainly lead Yemen to this tragic situation and that an approach by the political leadership to this civilized shift [unity] based on narrow-minded perspectives and calculations would lead everyone to this critical uncontrollable situation.

We made every possible effort to prevent the situation reaching the point it has now reached, and we submitted a serious initiative based on advanced local government that would preserve Yemen's unity and popular democracy and lay the foundations for the future. We explained that we left the homeland in the interest of unity and that we will remain loyal to that unity because we cannot forget the waves of martyrs who died for it nor can we forget that all the wars and infighting that occurred in our recent history were for the sake of unity, and also that we should not fight among ourselves for the disintegration of Yemen because history would condemn our entire generation for such a sin.

Despite all that, the crisis has deepened and the situation has worsened, warning of grave consequences as all institutions are being geared toward serving the conflict and the parties to the conflict, reaching the point of sharp polarization in the armed forces and security forces, which are being systematically mobilized on a divisive basis to resolve the situation.

Signs of explosion and infighting are looming on the horizon in our country, warning of a civil war that would destroy everything, tear Yemen and its people apart, revive all sectarian, partitionist, and tribal ills which were buried by the September, October, and great May revolutions, and destroy the achievements of generations of our struggle people.

Masses of our great people, the situation has reached a critical point and the time has come for the people to pronounce their verdict: No to infighting, no to the logic of force, no to the revivial of partition and totalitarian rule, and no to the disintegration of Yemen.

Here and in the name of millions of our people, I appeal to the political leadership to resort to reason and serious dialogue, which is the only option, and to begin to implement, step by step, what was agreed in the Dialogue Committee. I particularly appeal to our armed forces not to be dragged into that fatal conflict and not to aim their guns at any party because by doing that they would be aiming directly at the very heart of the people and their hopes and aspirations. Only the united voice of the people, all the people, and of their armed forces would safeguard unity, a resounding voice saying no to infighting and no to ruinous civil war, and yes to dialogue, for only dialogue will protect unity and democracy and maintain general security and stability in the region.

Talks With UN on Embargo Delayed Two Weeks

NC1101154394 Paris AFP in English 1510 GMT 11 Jan 94

[Text] Baghdad, Jan 11 (AFP)—Talks between Iraq and the United Nations on the embargo in force since August 1990 have been delayed by two weeks, a UN official said here Tuesday.

Deputy Prime Minister Tariq 'Aziz had said the negotiations would be held in mid-January in New York. But the UN official said they would now open at the end of the month or in early February.

"The two sides are busy compiling the necessary documents before the next round of negotiations," the official told AFP, asking not to be named. "They need two weeks to prepare for the meeting."

He also said that long-term monitoring of Iraq's post-war weapons programmes "has in effect started."

Aziz informed the United Nations on November 27 that Baghdad accepted long-term monitoring, under the terms of the ceasefire to the 1991 Gulf war which drove Iraqi troops out of Kuwait.

Iraq is expected to argue at the New York talks that it has met the conditions for the lifting of the embargo, which was imposed after its August 1990 invasion of the emirate.

But Rolf Ekeus, head of the UN disarmament commission, has proposed a six-month trial period for long-term monitoring before an end to the embargo.

Trade Minister on Improved Economic Situation

JN1101154994 Baghdad INA in English 1445 GMT 11 Jan 94

[Text] Baghdad, Jan 11 (INA)—Minister of trade said over the past year, his ministry has succeeded in achieving a state of self-sufficiency in staple food and commodities.

Dr. Muhammad Mahdi Salih added that the ministry has managed to provide Iraqi and Arab people and foreign nationals resident in Iraq with food ration and supply the local market with basic goods and commodities.

The minister noted that the cost of food items covered by the ration card stands at some 90 million dollars a month, indicating that in accordance with the ration system, the government distributes some 30,000 tonnes of food per month conveyed and transported by some 10,000 trucks of some 30 tonnes loading capacity each.

Dr. Salih went on to say that food subsidies amount to one and a half billion dinars annually.

The minister elaborated that in 1993, the ministry added new food items to the ration card and increased others, indicating that rations of sugar, vegetable oils and tea have increased by some 25 per cent over the past year.

He added that the ministry's staff have rebuilt some 139 projects damaged by allied air and missile attacks during the war and acts of terrorism and sabotage that followed, indicating that the said projects include silos, mills, granaries and warehouses.

The cost of the reconstruction work on the ministry's war-wrecked facilities and projects amounts to ID [Iraqi Dinars] 29 million, the minister said, noting that the estimate cost of work was ID 50 million.

Moreover, the ministry has licenced the establishment of 120 companies of the private sector with a capital of ID 90 million to help provide basic goods and commodities.

Jordanian Energy Minister Arrives for Talks

JN1201090894 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 12 Jan 94 p 32

[Text] Baghdad—INA—Leading a delegation, Walid 'Asfur, [Jordanian] minister of energy and mineral wealth, arrived in Baghdad yesterday on a visit of several days to Iraq.

The minister will hold talks with a number of Iraqi officials on bilateral relations and the scope for their promotion, especially in the field of oil industry.

Meets With Ramadan

JN1201131494 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1240 GMT 12 Jan 94

[Text] Baghdad, 12 Jan (INA)—Vice President Taha Yasin Ramadan today received a written message from Jordanian Prime Minister Dr. 'Abd-al-Salam al-Majali. The message states Jordan's desire to develop relations with Iraq in the interest of both countries and to strengthen the fraternal and historical ties between the two countries.

Jordanian Minister of Energy and Mineral Wealth Walid 'Asfur delivered the message when Taha Yasin Ramadan received him here today.

During the meeting, Taha Yasin Ramadan said the future will see the implementation of strategic development projects in Iraq. The projects the Iraqis have accomplished and their advanced experience in the oil, industry, and reconstruction fields are in the service of the Arab nation, Ramadan said.

Taha Yasin Ramadan also expressed Iraq's concern to develop and enhance its relations with fraternal Jordan.

The Jordanian minister of energy and mineral wealth praised Iraq's reconstruction drive despite the embargo, saying this reflects genuine self-reliance in reconstruction and progress and not depending on external capabilities.

The meeting was attended by Oil Minister Safa' Hadi Jawad and the Jordanian ambassador in Baghdad.

Oil Talks Begin 12 Jan

JN1201151894 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1415 GMT 12 Jan 94

[Text] Baghdad, 12 Jan (INA)—Iraqi-Jordanian oil talks began here today. Oil Minister Dr. Safa' Hadi Jawad

headed the Iraqi side to the talks, while Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources Walid Mithqal 'Asfur led the Jordanian side. During the meeting, both sides reviewed bilateral cooperation in the fields of industry and oil, as well as the means of enhancing and promoting this cooperation in the interest of the two fraternal countries through the exchange of expertise and technical advice.

At the outset of the session, Oil Minister Dr. Safa' Hadi Jawad reviewed with the fraternal Jordanian delegation the expertise and added capabilities acquired by technical and engineering cadres of the oil sector as a result of their counteroffensive to rebuild the oil and economic installations the evildoers destroyed during the vicious 30-state aggression against Iraq.

The Jordanian minister expressed his admiration of the Iraqis' capabilities and innovations. He appreciated their implementation of several giant projects, drawing on their intrinsic potential, although the unfair anti-Iraq embargo continues to be enforced.

Oil Minister Dr. Safa' Jawad Hadi said that the Oil Ministry is ready to provide fraternal Jordan with expertise and technical advice in the field of oil industries.

The Jordanian oil delegation arrived here yesterday on a visit of several days.

Oil Minister Dr. Safa' Jawad Hadi met earlier in the day with the Jordanian minister of energy and mineral resources and the delegation accompanying him. During the meeting, they discussed fraternal bilateral ties in the oil industries, and the means of promoting them.

Today, Transport and Communications Minister Ahmad Murtada Ahmad also met with Jordanian Energy and Mineral Resources Minister Walid Mithqal 'Asfur and his delegation.

During the meeting, they discussed cooperation between the two fraternal countries, particularly on transportation and communications, and the means of promoting cooperation in the interest of the two fraternal countries.

Five States To Sign Accord on Sharing Power Grids

JN1001151194 Baghdad INA in English 1400 GMT 10 Jan 94

[Text] Baghdad, Jan 10 (INA)—Four Arab countries and Turkey would sign shortly in Baghdad an agreement to connect their power grids. A source at the Ministry of Industry and Mineral told THE BAGHDAD OBSERVER. Iraq, Jordan, Egypt, Syria and Turkey will hold a meeting in Baghdad on January 15 to agree that each two neighbouring countries of the five can connect their national grids.

The aim of the project which was ratified in Ankara in 1989 by ministers of these five countries in charge of electricity is to make available a power reserve that can be used by any of the five countries and the exchange of power among these countries particularly at the times of peak in power consumption.

For example, in Iraq the peak in power consumption is during summer while in Turkey the peak is in winter. So, these two countries can exchange power.

Baghdad meeting which will be attended by directors-general of electricity in the five countries will also discuss feasibility studies of the project.

The source said the first phase of the project is expected to start in 1995 and each country would start to extend its power to bordering areas.

'Strategic' Carbon Black Project Accomplished

JN1201102294 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1240 GMT 10 Jan 94

[Text] Baghdad, 10 Jan (INA)—President Saddam Husayn has received a cable from Staff General Husayn Kamil Hasan, minister of industry and minerals, in which he conveyed to his excellency the good news about accomplishing the strategic carbon black project that will provide raw material to build the national industry.

The cable said: This project enabled our men to hold the key to modern technology through purely national efforts and programmed, creative action. This action displayed the most marvelous pictures of resolve and determination and incorporated boldness and science and knowledge which characterize the sons of Iraq.

The cable added that this strategic project will provide raw material to build the national industry, especially in manufacturing tires, batteries, inks, and various dyes.

The cable asserted that accomplishing this strategic project means taming [tarwid] crude oil and its derivatives, and even taming the sacred Iraqi soil in its great wealth and abundant water. This project opened up new horizons to the creative Iraqi mind. It is indeed the ax of the creative people that will smash the embargo and teach the enemies a profound lesson and will make them regret their reckless blockade.

Staff Gen. Husayn Kamil Hasan said this major project has a capacity of 25,000 tonnes annually. This will meet Iraq's needs of carbon black in various industries. Iraq used to import this material using hard currency, paying $1000-3000 per tonne. This means that Iraq is ready to help its brothers and friends in the oil countries in this field to break the monopoly and activate constructive cooperation and mutual interests.

Commander of Central Command Killed in Crash

TA1201081294 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0800 GMT 12 Jan 94

[Text] Deep mourning in the IDF [Israel Defense Forces]. Major General Nehemya Tamari, commander of the IDF Central Command, Major Ofir Kaufman, head of his bureau, as well as two Air Force pilots Captain 'Ofer Yo'eli and Captain Asaf Asher, were killed last night when their helicopter crashed in the Central Command base in Jerusalem. The families of the deceased were notified.

The helicopter crashed at 0200 last night when Maj. Gen. Tamari was on his way back after dealing with an incident in the Bet She'an Valley border line. The commander of the Air Force appointed a commission of inquiry, headed by a colonel, to investigate the circumstances of the crash.

The prime minister and the chief of staff were briefed during the night about the disaster. The members of the General Staff were also briefed.

'Infiltrator' From Jordan Captured at Border

TA1201143494 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1230 GMT 12 Jan 94

[Text] This morning, IDF [Israel Defense Forces] soldiers captured a person who crossed the border from Jordan in the Jordan Rift Valley, east of the city of Bet She'an. IDF troops arrived last night at the site of the infiltration and began combing the area. They apprehended the infiltrator this morning and brought him in for questioning.

Our correspondent in the territories Golan Yokhpaz reports that Major General Nehemya Tamari was in the area of the infiltration last night. The helicopter accident in which he was killed took place while he was returning from the area.

Peres on Taba Talks, City Building Initiative

TA1201065194 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500 GMT 12 Jan 94

[Text] Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres has said that Israel and the Palestinians already agree that they shall receive full autonomy, but he insists that this will not include responsibility for security and foreign affairs. Reporter Jack Katzenell asked him if at the Taba talks Israel will be prepared for new concessions on the size of the Jericho enclave:

[Begin recording] [Peres] Well, the size of Jericho was decided and I don't believe this is an open question.

[Katzenell] For the first time today, Israeli officials described the Cairo document not as an agreement, but an understanding.

[Peres] I don't know who described it, and I don't know what is the difference between understanding and agreement. You cannot agree unless you understand, and you cannot understand unless you agree, so what is the difference?

[Katzenell] Does it mean that Israel will be more flexible on the issue of the border crossing points, or the size of the Jericho enclave?

[Peres] Israel is flexible all the time on the crossing points. It cannot be flexible on the security issues. On that Israel will remain as it was in the Cairo talks.

[Katzenell] This evening Dr. Nabil Sha'th said that there was no progress on any of the main issues, after at lunch time [as heard] the Israeli sources suggested that an agreement had been reached. Is Israel indulging in wishful thinking, or is it a bad communication again with the Palestinians?

[Peres] I think all the declarations suffer from an early rhetorics. Let's wait a little bit and then we shall see.

[Katzenell] Today a Palestinian businessman proposed setting up 10 cities for 50,000 Palestinians. Would Israel take a positive view of such a program?

[Peres] Any positive enterprise will be met by Israeli positive response. [end recording]

'Master Plan' To Expand Jerusalem Detailed

TA1201114894 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 12 Jan 94 p 5

[Report by Tzvi Singer]

[Text] A master plan to set up a dense settlement bloc, which would make Jerusalem the center of a built-up area from Ma'ale Adumim in the east to the 'Etzyon Bloc in the south, is currently in the process of being approved.

The main effort is focused on linking Ma'ale Adumim and Jerusalem in order to create a single populated bloc. The Ministries of Defense, Interior, Construction and Housing, and Industry and Trade are behind the plan. It was approved by the Civil Administration's Supreme Planning Council after receiving the approval of the committee dealing with exceptional cases, headed by Noah Kinarti, the defense minister's assistant on settlement matters.

If implemented, the plan will be the first stage in the establishment of a new settlement bloc to be called the Adumim Bloc. It will include the town of Ma'ale Adumim, Kfar Adumim, Mitzpe Yeriho, and Qedar. Under the plan, the bloc will be linked to Jerusalem through uninterrupted construction along the new highway linking Ma'ale Adumim with the capital. After completion the distance between Ma'ale Adumim's municipal boundary and that of Jerusalem (the Pisgat Ze'ev neighborhood) will be some 400 meters, which means that in fact it will be a single bloc.

The planned construction will include housing, hotels, and commercial building over an area of some 5,000 dunams. It will come under Ma'ale Adumim's jurisdiction, along the highway to Jerusalem, where there are no Arab villages, except for (al-Zayyam)—which under the plan will remain outside the area of construction.

The Ma'ale Adumim Municipality wants to extend the plan eastward toward Mitzpe Yeriho and the other Jewish

settlements in the area, but it does not have the backing of the relevant government ministries for that.

According to Ma'ale Adumim Mayor Beni Kasri'el, the plan has the blessing and support of Ministers 'Uzi Bar'am and Binyamin Ben- Eli'ezer and the support of "the government's and Labor's right-wing flank," in addition to that of leading opposition Knesset members.

At the same time, a similar plan is being prepared for the 'Etzyon Bloc, linking it to the Green Line through the establishment of new settlements. In the first stage, a new settlement will be set up near the 'Adulam Bloc and the paramilitary outpost of Giv'ot, located between the 'Etzyon Bloc and the settlement of Betar 'Elit, which will be civilianized.

The 'Etzyon Bloc plan, prepared with the Jewish Agency's Settlement Department, has already been presented to Minister Shim'on Shetrit, and according to regional council head Shilo Gal has already received his blessing. It will be presented to the construction minister later in the month.

The plan is based on the idea of setting up territorial contiguity between the bloc and the Greater Jerusalem area by building on state lands in areas not populated by Arab settlements.

North of Jerusalem, a plan to expand the municipal area of Giv'at Ze'ev up to the Ramot neighborhood in north Jerusalem is in advanced stages of being approved. Giv'at Ze'ev's current municipal area stretches to the foothills of al-Nabi Samu'il, a distance of only 150 meters—as the crow flies—from Jerusalem's boundary, but privately-owned Arab land stand in the way of the planners.

Group To Go Ahead With 'Shadow Settlements'

TA1101182594 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1800 GMT 11 Jan 94

[Excerpt] Organizers of the This Is Our Land group that planned to establish shadow settlements throughout the West Bank and Gaza say they are going ahead with their project later this month. This is despite the decision by the Council of Jewish Communities in Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza to withdraw their support. [passage omitted]

IDF Soldier Killed, Another Injured in Qezi'ot

TA1201153394 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1400 GMT 12 Jan 94

[Text] An IDF [Israel Defense Forces] soldier was killed and another was wounded this morning in the Qezi'ot detention facility when a several rounds were mistakenly fired by an IDF officer. Our correspondent Yariv Ben-Yehuda reports:

The incident took place during the morning head count at the Qezi'ot detention facility. One of the inmates suddenly charged the IDF soldiers there. The officer in charge who attempted to prevent the prisoner from escaping from the prison fired his personal weapon, hitting the two soldiers. Sergeant Ehud Sabitzky was killed and a reserve soldier was injured and taken to hospital for treatment. The families of the two were notified. The Military Police have started an investigation into the incident.

Haberfeld Wins Primaries for Histadrut Post

TA1201072094 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500 GMT 12 Jan 94

[Excerpts] Now to the Labor primaries for the party nominee for the post of Histadrut [trade union federation] secretary general. Incumbent Hayim Haberfeld is well ahead with some 70 percent of the votes counted. Over to Dani Gur-Arye in Tel Aviv:

[Begin Gur-Arye recording] With 70 percent of the votes counted, Histadrut General Secretary Haberfeld has received two thirds of the votes, Knesset Member 'Amir Peretz received one third, and the third candidate, Jacques Amir, received just three percent of the votes. [passage omitted]

The results deal a tough blow not only to 'Amir Peretz, but to the whole group of young reform-minded Labor Knesset members, including Hayim Ramon, Yosi Beilin, Avraham Burg, Ya'el Dayan, Hagay Merom, and others. The group, especially Hayim Ramon, garnered all its influence to back Peretz and lost. Already late yesterday Labor members were talking about how a Peretz defeat would effect other major decisions in the party, including the one on Ramon's health reform bill. [end recording] [passage omitted]

Radioactivity Monitoring Stations: 'Security Valve'

TA1201071794 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0600 GMT 12 Jan 94

[Text] The Israel Atomic Energy Commission [IAEC] says that 20 radioactivity monitoring stations are currently located around the Dimona nuclear reactor. Since the reactor was established, however, there have been no mishaps, leaks, or radioactive contamination incidents. Our correspondent Shulamit Schmerling was told by the IAEC that the monitoring stations merely serve as a security valve, whereas the safety operations are carried out within the reactor's laboratories. The IAEC has implemented the lessons of the Chernobyl nuclear reactor disaster relating to emergency preparations and relaying reliable information to the public.

Paper Denounces U.S. Search for Israeli Bodies

JN1101123294 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 11 Jan 94 pp 1, 21

[Editorial: "Search for Corpses and Disavowal of Justice"]

[Text] There are many events which an observer not only cannot understand but cannot believe are happening. These events are amusing enough to call for sorrow and are tragic enough to call for amusement. Perhaps the visit by a U.S. congressional delegation to the region to search for the corpses of Israeli soldiers is one of these events which calls for sorrow, amusement, denunciation, and much contempt. Indeed, such action by representatives of the American people should receive the aforementioned reaction and should be denounced by the Americans themselves. What we know is that those who are searching for corpses did not come to the region to investigate the reasons behind the bombing of the ship "Liberty" and did not open an investigation into this Zionist crime to show their voters Israel's responsibility for an Israeli crime committed against U.S. soldiers. Although we already know that U.S. policy is not based on even a minimum level of ethics and does not care about values and principles, this act by members of the U.S. Congress makes us panic over this level of ethical collapse.

This act by those members is no more than cheap political hypocrisy. If they were real representatives of the American people, then they would have been horrified by what is happening in Yugoslavia. They also would have questioned the crime against tens of thousands of Iraqi children and sick Iraqis who were martyred because of a shortage of food and medicine thanks to the Washington government and the administrations of Presidents Bush and Clinton.

The behavior of the U.S. Congress members puts us in a state of panic in terms of what is awaiting the human family under the new world order. While those members of Congress are busy searching for the corpses of Israeli killers who slaughtered thousands of people in Lebanon, Egypt, Palestine, Syria, Tunis, and other countries, they do not pause at the scores of U.S. crimes which continue to be committed against humanity every minute. They also do not deem it important to say a word of truth in light of the human tragedies which continue to result in the loss of hundreds of thousands of people each day without moving the conscience of one Congress member or have him ask: Why is our country killing all those people?

Everything that is happening is cause for sorrow and means the United States is a country which possesses so many capabilities but only employs them to kill people and deprive them of security and tranquility and of food and medicine. Then its representatives come to our region to search for the corpses of killers whose Israeli military mechanism did not stop its wars against the Arabs for more than four decades under a Western racist sponsorship. The ranks of this Western racist sponsorship are headed by a Washington that has the mentality of a cowboy who is rancorous over anything that deals with good, security, and peace.

Prime Minister Receives U.S. General Hoar

JN1101124994 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 11 Jan 94

[Text] Dr. 'Abd-al-Salam al-Majali, the prime minister and defense minister, today received in his office at the Prime Ministry General Joseph Hoar, commander of the United States Central Command, and the accompanying military delegation. During the meeting, the two sides reviewed bilateral relations.

Officials Confer With General Hoar

JN1101171094 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 11 Jan 94

[Text] His Highness Prince Muhammad Bin-Talal, the regent, received at the Royal Hashemite Court today General Joseph Hoar, commander of the U.S. Central Command. They reviewed bilateral relations and regional and international issues of common interest. Attending the meeting were His Highness Prince 'Abdallah Bin-al-Husayn, and Staff General 'Abd-al-Hafiz Mar'i al-Ka'abinah, chairman of the joint chiefs of staff, and the U.S. charge d'affaires in Jordan.

In the presence of His Highness Prince 'Abdallah Bin-al-Husayn, His Excellency al-Sharif Zayd Bin-Shakir, chief of the Royal Hashemite Court, also received General Joseph Hoar. They exchanged views on various regional and international issues and bilateral relations.

Staff General 'Abd-al-Hafiz Mar'i al-Ka'abinah, chairman of the joint chiefs of staff, received General Hoar at the General Command today. Al-Ka'abinah reviewed the regional situation in general, the region's strategic importance, and the humanitarian role the Armed Forces are carrying out to maintain security and peace in various world regions. They also reviewed aspects of bilateral cooperation and coordination and issues of common interest.

Al-Majali Meets Japan's Deputy Foreign Minister

JN1101174794 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 11 Jan 94

[Text] Prime Minister Dr. 'Abd-al-Salam al-Majali received in his office at the Prime Ministry today Japanese Deputy Foreign Minister Hiroshi Fukuda.

Fukuda said they discussed the Middle East peace process and its prospects, in addition to bilateral relations and the need to consolidate bilateral cooperation in various fields. He expressed Japan's determination to cooperate with Jordan in all possible fields in the present and future, stemming from Jordan's political importance, known contributions, and efforts made in various areas to support the peace process and achieve regional stability.

Fukuda pointed out that an integrated program is currently being prepared on the aid Japan can extend to Jordan, so this aid package can take its final shape.

Regarding Japan's role in promoting the peace process, Fukuda said: We are determined to intervene politically in this process, and we seek an effective role in the multinational talks. He pointed out that the peace process managed to achieve progress, but that there are some obstacles to this process. However, the peace process in itself is important, sensitive, and historic, and useful from various aspects, he added.

Japan Ready To Extend Economic Aid

JN1201123594 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 12 Jan 94 p 3

[By JORDAN TIMES staff reporter]

[Text] Amman—Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Salam al-Majali Tuesday [11 January] met with Japanese Deputy Foreign Minister Hiroshi Fukuda who reaffirmed Japan's appreciation of Jordan's role in the Middle East peace process and Tokyo's pledge to extend assitance to the Kingdom.

Mr. Fukuda said that during the 30-minute meeting, he made a general review of the developments in the peace process and Japanese-Jordanian relations.

Noting that Dr. al-Majali visited Tokyo last month and "impressed the (Japanese) government of the difficulties facing Jordan resulting from the Gulf war," Mr. Fukuda said his country stood ready to extend assistance to help the Kingdom overcome its economic difficulties.

Speaking in an interview with the JORDAN TIMES, Mr. Fukuda, who is on a Middle East visit billed as a familiarisation trip, recalled that his prime minister, Morihiro Hosokawa, had promised Jordan to help it alleviate its foreign debt burden.

"The promise meant that Japan will make more assitance available to Jordan since (Tokyo) is in no position to write off debts," Mr. Fukuda explained. Japanese assistance was discussed during his meeting with Dr. al-Majali, Mr. Fukuda said. But he declined to be specific.

However, he confirmed that Japan was "in the final stage" of granting an $80 million loan to help develop Jordan's energy sector.

"We also touched upon other potential projects and programmes which will be of mutual interest," he said.

Japan holds about $900 million of Jordan's $6.88 billion foreign debts. Most of the Japanese part of the debts is in the form of soft loans for long term at nominal interest rates extended during and after the Gulf crisis of 1990-1991.

Japan attaches high importance to its relations with Jordan because of the Kingdom's key role in the Middle East peace process and its "geopolitical" features, Mr. Fukuda said.

"We are watching with admiration the efforts demonstrated by Jordan to advance the peace process and also towards a free market economy," he said, adding that Japan also appreciated the Kingdom's participation in international peacekeeping operations.

By coincidence, he said, during a trip to the Dead Sea on Tuesday he met a Jordanian officer who served with the U.N. force in Cambodia, where Japan also maintains an army unit.

The officer, whose name was not immediately available, spoke about his time in Cambodia and of his meetings with Japanese counterparts, Mr. Fukuda said.

The encounter, the Japanese minister said, "is the kind of experience" that one enjoys and gives an added personal dimension to bilateral relations.

In the broader context of Japanese contribution to the Middle East peace process, Mr. Fukuda noted that Tokyo has pledged $200 million in assistance to support the Palestinian self-rule envisaged under the Sept. 13 Israel-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) deal.

"This is not a political statement, but a firm commitment," he said, adding that $25 million of the aid were already disbursed in the public health and health sectors in the occupied territories.

"We are in a hurry to disburse the rest of the amount, and we are in continuous contact with the World Bank and others," he said.

Asked whether Japan shared a reported international feeling that there are no "credible" Palestinian institutions to channel the more than $2.2 billion aid pledged at a donor's conference in October, Mr. Fukuda said:

"The legal requirement of the Japanese assistance has to be met; afterall it is tax-payers' money. We have to be satisfied on our side that the...assistance is spent for the purpose for which it has been allocated and intended."

Mr. Fukuda, who arrived here Monday overland from Israel through the occupied West Bank, said he had met with Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres, his deputy Yosi Beilin and other Israeli officials as well as Palestinian leaders in the occupied territories, including members and advisors of the peace negotiating team.

"These meetings were very enlightening to me," given the fact that it is the first visit to the Middle East after taking office, Mr. Fukuda said.

Japan is playing a key role in the multilateral phase of the Middle East peace process. in addition to chairing the multilateral working group on the environment, it is vice-chairman of the committee on regional economic cooperation and water.

Japan is also a member of the working groups on refugees and arms control.

Japanese officials accompanying Mr. Fukuda said two meetings were planned in Cairo next month, of consultative committees of the multilateral phase, to discuss "a series of specific ideas" for specific projects involving regional cooperation in various fields.

Asked how he viewed the progress of the peace negotiations between the Arabs and Israel, Mr. Fukuda said: "It is important to be optimistic."

Expressing hope that the peace talks would eventually lead to a just and fair peace settlement in the region, he added: "Nobody is going to benefit from failure (of the peace process), but everybody will lose from failure."

Senate Briefed on Peace Process, PLO Accord

JN1101184594 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 11 Jan 94

[Text] Senate President Ahmad al-Lawzi has said that Prime Minister Dr. 'Abd-al-Salam al-Majali reviewed the scope and dimensions of Jordanian policy and the active diplomatic march led by His Majesty King Husayn on the national, pan-Arab, and international levels before the Senate today for two and one-half hours.

In a statement to the Jordanian news agency, following a closed session held by the Senate today, al-Lawzi added that Dr. al-Majali answered all questions posed by the Senate members. He answered questions on the recent Jordanian-Palestinian economic agreement, developments in the peace process, and the efforts made by His Majesty King Husayn and his government to restore accord among the Arabs and emphasize their solidarity and unified position on various developments and challenges.

Al-Lawzi said that the Senate expressed profound thanks to Dr. al-Majali for his constant emphasis on the need for consultations and cooperation between the legislative and executive authorities. The Senate also expressed adherence to, and support for, the role of Jordan's leadership, message, and people, he added.

Al-Majali Views Relations With Iraq, Kuwait

JN1101120994 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 11 Jan 94 pp 28, 24

[Excerpts] Amman, PETRA—Prime Minister Dr. 'Abd-al-Salam al-Majali has met with foreign journalists at the Prime Ministry and answered questions about the latest regional and local political developments. [passage omitted]

Concerning reports on a joint Moroccan-Bahraini initiative to achieve reconciliation between Jordan and Saudi Arabia, the prime minister said that such an initiative constitutes a good opportunity which Jordan welcomes, especially since it is in harmony with the policy of reconciliation, particularly with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, with which we have joint neighborly relations and interests, and which plays an effective role in the Gulf region. He added that the relations with Kuwait might need a longer time.

About Jordan's relations with Iraq, the prime minister said: The fraternal Iraqi people have suffered a great deal and are still suffering. We should all, in the Arab homeland, seek to alleviate their suffering.

He stressed that our relations with all the Arab states are based on mutual respect and on noninterference in the others' affairs. [passage omitted]

Israeli Attempts To 'Sow Distrust' Viewed

JN1101150994 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic 11 Jan 94 pp 1, 18

[Editorial: "Resuming Taba Negotiations and Israel's Intentions"]

[Text] Finally, the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations have resumed in the Egyptian resort of Taba after an 11-day hiatus, amid signs that Israel plans to prolong the negotiations. The Rabin government has asserted that negotiations on the Palestinian-Israeli track could last two months. The Palestinian side, however, does not think there is any need for the negotiations to last more than three weeks.

Apparently, Israel does not plan to reach an agreement with the PLO anytime soon. This is driving it to obstruct the negotiations. Israel has repeatedly said that it will not relinquish sovereignty over the crossings and the bridges and will not abandon direct supervision of Jewish settlements in the self-rule region, nor will it change its position on the size of Jericho. In brief, Israel has already started to create problems and concentrate on disputed issues.

It could be that Israel wants to paralyze its negotiations with the PLO to see the outcome of the al-Asad-Clinton summit and the situation on the Syrian-Israeli track and how this is going to affect the peace process on all tracks. Israel is thus capitalizing on the weak coordination between the Arab cordon states and the suspension of negotiations on some tracks.

Since the Madrid conference, the Rabin government has been seeking to divide the peace process and conclude separate peace treaties with certain Arab parties. This government will continue to exploit the weak coordination between the Arab cordon states and the weakness of their negotiating cards.

The Arab cordon states should therefore take note of the intentions of the Rabin government and enhance and deepen their coordination to restore credibility. The Rabin government has worked hard to sow distrust among the Arab parties.

It is worth mentioning that Nabil Sha'th, head of the Palestinian negotiating team, has denied Israeli claims that Jordan objects to Palestinian supervision of the crossings.

It is important that the Arab cordon states should be vigilant and alert to Israeli attempts to destroy Arab coordination and conclude separate agreements that will prove unacceptable to future Arab generations.

Verdict in Liberation Party Case To Be Issued

JN1101151794 Amman AL-ASWAQ in Arabic 11 Jan 94 pp 1, 16

[AL-ASWAQ report on "new witness" in trial of defendents accused in the assassination attempt on king]

[Text] The State Security Court held a session yesterday evening under military judge Lieutenant General Hafiz Amin, the court president. The court continued to look into the case of the defendants accused of belonging to al-Tahrir [Liberation] Party. The court summoned a new witness who testified before the court panel and the defense representatives. The defense representatives objected to the testimony of the witness, arguing that the case had already been referred to the panel for a final verdict. Besides, the defense representatives were not informed of the name of the witness in advance. Some of the defendants parents objected to the witness. This prompted the president of the court to order them to leave the courtroom.

The session lasted five hours. The court is expected to issue a verdict next Sunday. It is worth mentioning that the decisions of the State Security Court are not final. The decisions, along with all the papers of the case, will be referred to the Court of Appeals.

PETRA reported that the court heard testimony from the court witness, a bailiff who wrote down the minutes of the investigation. The bailiff asserted that the prosecutor of the State Security Court, after identifying himself to the defendants, read them the charges and their rights before they made any statements at the military judiciary building, and that no other parties were present. When the defense lawyers asked the bailiff about the way the defendants were brought to the military court, there was debate between the defense lawyer and the public prosecutor. Afterward, some 20 attendees left the courtroom after making threats and disrupting order.

On their way out, these people attacked court guards, smashed windows, and banged wooden doors and walls. Immediately, the court president ordered that they be arrested for disrupting order and committing an act punishable by law. He ordered that those people be referred to competent agencies for interrogation.

Pan-Arab Action Front Party To Be Licensed

JN1101141794 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic
11 Jan 94 p 3

[Text] Interior Minister Salamah Hammad has decided to license a party called the Pan-Arab Action Front Party [Hizb Jabhat al-'Amal al-Qawmi].

Party spokesman Lawyer Salim al-Suways said: The licensing of our party by the Interior Ministry at a time when the Arab homeland is undergoing difficult circumstances comes as a real test and a challenge, which we will face according to our pan-Arab constants by entrenching effective organizational structures capable of absorbing changes. We do not want to be just another number in the list of licensed party. Moreover, we do not want to become an elite organization; we seek to be a popular pan-Arab instrument.

He added: We believe that the establishment of the Pan-Arab Action Front Party, which includes pan-Arab parties and figures, is an attempt to rebel against the deteriorating and fragmented situation of the pan-Arab forces in Jordan and the Arab homeland. This situation weakened these forces and robbed them of their political influence. The pan-Arab forces, which seek to achieve unity and democracy, should not remain divided and in conflict. While we assert that we are a channel for pan-Arab struggle, we hope to be the melting pot for pan-Arab forces on the road toward the establishment of a united pan-Arab front.

Lawyer al-Suways added that the Pan-Arab Action Front Party is a result of the unity of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, the United Organization [al-tanzim al-muwahhad], the Jordanian Revolutionary People's Party, the progressive democratic and pan-Arab forces, the Arab popular liberation movement in Jordan, in addition to a group of independent national figures.

The party formed a leadership council of 27 members and an executive committee of 11 members. It also formed a number of party bureaus. The party will continue to call on the national parties and figures to continue dialogue in order to achieve unity and form a broad pan-Arab front.

It is worth noting that the party's executive committee consists of Muhammad al-Zu'bi, the secretary general; Ahmad Muhammad Ibrahim, also known as Abu-'Isa, assistant secretary general and head of the political affairs bureau; Shams 'Abd-al-Karim, assistant secretary general and head of the organizational bureau; 'Ali al-Hamshari, assistant secretary general and head of the information bureau; Salim al-Suways, the media spokesman; Mahmud al-Nawayisah, head of the cultural bureau; Majid Mahafizah, secretary of the executive committee; 'Adnan Mansur, official in charge of financial affairs; Burayk al-Hadid, head of the popular organizations bureau; Hani al-Dahlah; and Fayiz al-'Adwan.

Defense Minister on South, Syrian Troops

NC1101183394 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1630 GMT 11 Jan 94

[Text] Defense Minister Muhsin Dallul says the problem with Israel is political, not security, and that no security committee will be worthwhile if the political issue—namely occupation—is not resolved. He pledged that the Army will assume responsibility for security in the south after the occupation has been ended, and that there will be no weapons in the south other than those of the Army.

The minister, who was talking to the dean of editors Milhim Karam, said any linkage between the Syrian presence in Lebanon and the Israeli occupation of Lebanese territory is treason. He explained that the Syrian presence is requested by the government for pressing needs related to the reunification of Lebanon. He said the Army's main mission is to take charge of security in the south and ensure that no armed force other than the legitimate forces will be present there.

The defense minister categorically denied the possibility of incorporating agent Lahd militias [South Lebanese Army] into the Lebanese Army. This matter exclusively concerns Lebanese authority, he said. Dallul said the Army must always reflect the country's pride and might. He said the Army is obtaining weapons to defend the country and serve the citizens and their security. He pointed out that Army roadblocks are established only for security reasons, not political ones.

On the security situation in the country, Minister Dallul stressed that no one can prevent the judiciary from opening any file. He expected the security agencies to complete the investigations on the bombing of the Phalangist Party headquarters very soon. He praised improvements in the security services and the military establishment.

Dallul described the upcoming Syrian-U.S. summit as historic and decisive for the region's crisis, especially Israel's occupation of Syrian and Lebanese territory. He expected the summit to result in major progress in the negotiations and relations with the West, notably the United States.

Syrian Military Delegation Meets Officials

NC1101121994 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1130 GMT 11 Jan 94

[Text] A ranking Syrian military delegation today visited President Ilyas al-Hirawi, Chamber Speaker Nabih Birri, Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri, Defense Minister Muhsin Dallul, and Army Commander General Emile Lahhud. The Syrian delegation is made up of Major General Ibrahim Safi, the new commander of the Syrian forces in Lebanon; Major General 'Isa Shidyaq, former commander of the Syrian forces in Lebanon; and Brigadier General Ghazi Kan'an, chief of Syrian military intelligence in Lebanon.

Al-Hirawi, Syria's al-Asad Discuss Peace Process

NC1101204994 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 2000 GMT 11 Jan 94

[Text] In a telephone conversation this evening, President Ilyas al-Hirawi and Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad discussed the peace process in the Middle East and the Lebanese position on the implementation of UN Security Council resolution 425.

Birri Declines Meeting With U.S. Congress Team

NC1101174694 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1630 GMT 11 Jan 94

[Text] Chamber of Deputies Speaker Nabih Birri has declined to receive the U.S. Congress delegation out of respect for the U.S. law that bans U.S. Congressmen from visiting Lebanon, as he announced today.

Parallel to this position, the delegation's visit created a wave of criticism among party circles, which saw in the visit a disdain for the dignity of the Lebanese people because the delegation's mission was confined to searching for Israeli soldiers while ignoring the destiny of Lebanese detainees and captives in Israeli prisons.

Mufti Qabalan Decries U.S. Congressmen's Visit

NC1201124194 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1130 GMT 12 Jan 94

[Text] Commenting on the U.S. Congress team's visit to Lebanon, Ja'farite Mufti Shaykh 'Abd-al-Amir Qabalan said it demonstrates the continuing U.S. partiality toward the Israeli enemy. He said the team's principal concerns are the remains of the Israelis and the whereabouts of the Israeli pilot.

Mufti Qabalan added that the Lebanese and Arab detainees who are suffering in Israeli prisons are of no value in the American view. Shaykh Qabalan called for releasing the Lebanese detainees if the Americans wish to show signs of goodwill.

Suspected 1986 Berlin Bomber Imprisoned in Tyre

NC1101190694 Beirut AL-DIYAR in Arabic 7 Jan 94 p 24

[Report by Mahmud al-Zayyat from Sidon]

[Text] It has been learned that the Palestinian detainee Yasir al-Shuraydi, whose extradition is requested by the German authorities for alleged involvement in the bombing of a discotheque in Berlin in 1986 that killed three Americans is in a Tyre prison on charges of attempted murder and forgery and may face fresh charges in seven pending cases.

It has been learned that several charges against al-Suraydi were dropped due to insufficient evidence. However, he is expected to face further charges in several other cases and will stand public trial later this month.

You will recall that in 1983, when al-Shuraydi lived in Libya, Germany called on that country to extradite him. He was later implicated in the murder of a Libyan citizen called Mustafa al-'Ashiq. Al-Shuraydi, born in 1959 and a resident of 'Ayn al-Hulwah camp, hails from the al-Safsaf, a village in northern Palestine.

South Public Prosecutor Justice Hatim Madi commented on the German request for al-Shuraydi's extradition, saying: "The issue of extradition depends on whether the legal conditions for extradition are met. It also depends on the strength of the case against the defendant. Following the interrogation of the person whose extradition is requested, the Higher Court's public prosecutor is to refer his file to the justice minister together with a report."

Justice Madi added: "Extradition can be effected by a cabinet decree passed upon the recommendation of the justice minister. I do not think that there is an international extradition treaty between Lebanon and Germany. In this case, Articles 30 to 36 of the Lebanese penal code, governing the extradition of criminals between countries, would apply."

Justice Madi said: "As long as an individual is facing trial in a Lebanese court he cannot be extradited, because Lebanese law should take precedence. If the extradition of a prisoner is requested for a certain crime, we will not try him for that crime, but it have to wait until he serves his prison sentence before we look into the crime for which his extradition is requested."

Amal Reportedly Attacks Post 11 Jan

NC1201092294 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0900 GMT 12 Jan 94

[Text] According to a statement issued by the Amal Movement's operations room, the Lebanese resistance group Amal attacked an enemy post near the 'Ali al-Tahir position at 2215 yesterday. The post received direct hits and the troops manning it were killed or wounded.

Immediately afterward, the enemy and agents bombarded Kafr Tibnit and al-Nabatiyah with artillery and large-caliber machine guns.

Al-Asad Receives Libyans, al-Qadhdhafi Message

JN1101174094 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1615 GMT 11 Jan 94

[Text] At 1315 today, His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad received Colonel Mustafa al-Kharrubi, member of the 1 September Revolution's Command Council in the Libyan Jamahiriyah; Mr. Ahmad Bin-Khayal, head of the Arab Homeland Department at the Libyan Foreign Ministry; and Mr. Ahmad Jallud, director of the Libyan Liaison Bureau in Damascus.

Col. al-Kharrubi conveyed a message from Col. Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi, leader of the 1 September Revolution in the Libyan Jamahiriyah, to His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad, who gave him a message in reply.

The talks between President al-Asad and the Libyan delegation addressed Arab and regional developments.

Media Commentaries View Upcoming Geneva Summit

Importance of UN Resolutions Noted

JN1101153094 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1230 GMT 11 Jan 94

[Station commentary]

[Text] Gentlemen: The talks held by the foreign ministers of the signatories of the Damascus Declaration over the past two days turned into a show of solidarity with Syria and support for its efforts to restore Arab territories and rights and reach a just and comprehensive peace in the region.

The foreign ministers informed His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad of their countries' complete support and recognition of Syria's pan-Arab orientation. Their closing statement also took note of Syria's visible and vital role in the peace process and the importance of the upcoming Geneva summit between Presidents Hafiz al-Asad and Bill Clinton. They expressed the hope that the session will advance a just and comprehensive peace based on UN Security Council Resolutions 242, 338, and 425, the land-for-peace formula, an Israeli pullout from all the occupied Arab territories, and the restoration of Palestinian rights. President al-Asad made it clear to the Arab foreign ministers that Syria will continue to be driven by the same pan-Arab policies it has set for itself; namely to defend Arab rights and pursue a just and universal peace in the region. Thus, the Arab foreign ministers who came to Damascus to voice their solidarity with Syria and its stands, have, in effect, confirmed President al-Asad as a spokesman for the Arab nation and a champion of its rights and causes in the planned summit with the U.S. president. As well as being Syria's roaring voice, Al-Asad will be the voice of all the Arabs and the true articulator of their aspirations. Against the background of a stalled Middle East peace process, Arabs across the Arab world naturally attach the highest importance to this summit. Israel has been trying to deal with the Arab states one at a time and promote partial settlements and separate deals that can hardly lead to peace or meet the aspirations of Arab masses. Syria has won the international community over to its argument that a Middle East settlement found lacking in justice and universality is doomed. That Mr. Clinton is going to a summit in Geneva shows that the United States is sold on the idea of a just and universal peace and a central role for Syria, not only in its own right, but also as a spokesman for all the Arabs and a repository for their hopes and aspirations.

The genuine support voiced by the Arabs for Syria's agenda and al-Asad's pan-Arab orientations will make the historic Geneva session even more important. Assuming that the session proves useful, it will give a fresh impetus to the peace process and advance a just and universal peace and put the stalled talks back on track. However, if the summit is to succeed the United States will have to further implementation of the UN Security Council resolutions—the principles on which the Madrid conference and the Washington talks were launched. These resolutions are absolutely clear on a number of key issues: A total Israeli withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories, a halt to Jewish settlement building there, and the restoration of Palestinian rights. The Americans themselves have summed these up as the land-for-peace formula.

The Washington talks were an opportunity for Israel to climb on the bandwagon of the Middle East peace process. But Israel has deliberately passed up all the chances to make peace, choosing land grabbing and repression over peace and tranquility. It has almost wrecked all the American peacemaking efforts and led the region to the brink of an explosion.

It is high time Israel showed a real interest in peace and the international community moved to impose a just and universal peace and force Israel from all occupied Arab territory.

Success Depends on Pressure on Israel

JN1201073494 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0545 GMT 12 Jan 94

[From the press review]

[Text] AL-BA'TH highlights the important upcoming summit between Presidents Hafiz al-Asad and Bill Clinton. It notes comments by Swiss papers, which highlight this meeting, considering it a major event, expressing hope that the meeting will achieve its desired objectives and give great momentum to the peace process.

AL-BA'TH notes various media reports about Syria's major, key role in the peace process. Syria not only defends its national interests. It also strongly defends all Arab interests. U.S. President Bill Clinton and Secretary of State Warren Christopher were the first to note that there can be no peace in the region without Syria.

The paper adds: It is common knowledge that Syria, as the entire world has acknowledged, contributed to the convening of the Madrid conference. Syria still believes that the Madrid formula remains the basis in any real endeavor to establish a just and comprehensive peace. Syria has

repeatedly said that a comprehensive solution alone would lead to peace and stability in the region.

AL-BA'TH concludes: The Geneva summit between Presidents Hafiz al-Asad and Bill Clinton is extremely important. As many observers think, the summit comes at a time when the peace process has reached a dead end because of Israel's rejection of the Madrid formula and its refusal to implement international resolutions that stipulate full withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories. Therefore, the whole world hopes the Geneva summit will give new momentum to the stalled peace process. To achieve this, the U.S. Administration is required to take a firmer stance to consolidate the principle of international legitimacy.

AL-THAWRAH says the world is looking in the direction of Geneva and is anxiously awaiting the convening of the summit between Presidents Hafiz al-Asad and Bill Clinton and its results, which, it is hoped, will usher in a new stage of U.S.-Syrian ties and cooperation regarding the peace process.

AL-THAWRAH adds that the nature of the issues and hot topics that will be discussed, in addition to other issues which the two presidents are expected to address, will make the summit meeting a historic event and a major turning point, especially in light of the constant, principled positions of al-Asad's Syria toward these issues. These positions, as everybody has acknowledged, are now firmly embraced by the world. This confirms the credibility of Syrian policy and its sound approach.

The summit reflects a clear recognition of Syria's important, central, and weighty role. It is also a U.S. and international confirmation that Syria is a major party to the Middle East equation, a major interlocutor, and truly embodies hopes and aspirations for the liberation of lands and restoration of rights.

AL-THAWRAH asserts that leader al-Asad is a man of constants and difficult historic positions in difficult times. He has proven under all circumstances, and in an age of stormy changes and developments, that he is the person most capable of steering the nation's ship toward a safe shore. Al-Asad is going to Geneva to speak in the name of all Arabs. The nation which authorized him realizes that he is its faithful son and honest leader who can be entrusted with issues concerning future and destiny.

While stressing the importance of the summit and the fact that it is a juncture between war and peace, its success depends on the U.S. side which sponsored the peace process and which is authorized by the international community and how much it is willing to pressure Israel to rectify the course of the peace process, abide by the Madrid point of reference and formula, and adhere to all resolutions of international legitimacy. Any other wager that does not take into consideration a radical change in Israeli positions and performance toward peace is an illusion and self-deception that will not lead to any result.

'Scenario' of Summit Detailed

PM1201121894 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 11 Jan 94 p 15

[Article by Joseph Samahah: "Summit Scenario"]

[Text] The summit meeting between Presidents Bill Clinton and Hafiz al-Asad is important, but perhaps less important than the Syrian media services are saying. However, these exaggerations are not supposed to lead to the opposite of what they are intended for. The Syrian president can put numerous cards on the negotiating table: the hitch in the implementation of the Palestinian-Israeli agreement, commitment to Lebanon seriously and the resistance card tacitly, preservation of a form of Arab boycott [of Israel], the relationship with Iran and Iraqi opposition parties, support for the 10 [Palestinian] factions [opposed to the peace process], the U.S. need for stability in the region, Israel's willingness to accept a kind of regional settlement, "tolerance" toward Syrian Jews and efforts to facilitate the Congress committee's work, the absence of any serious challenge to the existing [Syrian] authority which declares its willingness to accept a comprehensive solution that returns the occupied territory, and so on...

On the other hand, the U.S. President will not forget that he is in possession of precious negotiation cards: the absence of the Soviet Union, the general Arab weakness which has worsened since the Gulf war, the lack of credibility of the Syrian military power—which means there is no nonpolitical option, Israel's breakthroughs in recent months under the U.S. plan to seize the region by the "collar," possible Turkish pressures, the Syrian economic situation, and so on...

These equations give rise to expectations, given that this kind of meeting usually ends up with a tacit, not detailed, agreement. On that basis, and in accordance with what is generally accepted and common, the following scenario can be proposed:

A. President al-Asad explains the peace concept he would accept as a beginning for discussing the other issues. He hands this card to Clinton in response to successive Israeli statements, the most recent of which is Rabin's statement linking the concept of peace with the scale of the withdrawal. This leads to opening the door to the negotiations in Washington so that the new round will lead to a declaration of principles linking Syrian sovereignty over the Golan and the peace—that is in accordance with a timetable that could take years to implement. An integrated solution, but phased implementation.

B. The Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon coincides with a cosmetic Syrian redeployment under which Damascus would continue to have the upper hand at the security and political level. Here the logic of the the Lebanese-Syrian treaty would dominate and none of the agreements signed between the two countries or those to be signed in the future would be affected. In this way, Washington will have recognized Syria's regional influence in return for the

"share" Israel has won through the accord with the PLO and which it will obtain if a Middle Eastern market is established.

C. U.S.-Syrian relations enter a new phase whose theme is the removal of Syria's name from the list of the states supporting terrorism in return for steps that reshape Damascus' relations with the Lebanese and Palestinian forces opposed to the peace process. In this connection Washington can be content with encouraging the features of the Syrian economic opening-up, without pausing much at the continuation of political control.

These are general ideas trying to precede the almost certain positive results of this summit. It seems that the Palestinian issue now belongs to Yitzhaq Rabin's "jurisdiction" and that Lebanon is a topic on the U.S.-Syrian agenda, and that the margin of choice is now narrowing with regard to Jordan. All these parties attended the al-Asad-Carter summit in 1977 and the al-Asad-Bush summit in 1990. True, the equations have changed and Syria's regional influence has declined to some extent, but the matter did not reach the point of confining discussions to the Golan only.

Syrian Role in Summit Viewed

JN0901110794 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0545 GMT 9 Jan 94

[Press review]

[Text] Today's press commentaries focus on the summit meeting between Presidents al-Asad and Clinton in Geneva mid-January.

Under the headline "The Madrid Formula is the Basis," AL-BA'TH says: Undoubtedly, the entire world is showing great interest in the summit between President Hafiz al-Asad and U.S. President Bill Clinton. AL-BA'TH indicates that U.S. political circles are showing special interest in the summit. Considering it a major event in the peace process, these circles pin hopes on it as an effort to achieve real progress toward the aspired peace. Noting U.S. political circles' statements, the paper says that these statements affirm that the importance of the Geneva summit stems from the issues that will be raised for discussion. The U.S. political circles believe that the summit will discuss very substantial and meaningful issues, especially since President Hafiz al-Asad will emphasize the stipulations of the Madrid peace conference. These stipulations stress a comprehensive solution through the implementation of the UN resolutions which call for a full, comprehensive withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories.

AL-BA'TH says that Syria went to the Madrid conference and then to the Washington talks with a specific and clear vision of the nature of peace. A few days from now, Syria will go to the Geneva summit with the same view because of its absolute faith in the need to work to establish a just, comprehensive regional peace which will guarantee Arab rights. The paper says that despite all that has happened and all that might happen, Syria will not change its stands concerning the Arab-Israeli conflict. This is because Syria is fully convinced that without a full, comprehensive withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories, it is impossible to achieve a just, comprehensive peace.

Concluding, AL-BA'TH says: The prerequisites and requirements of a genuine peace are known and clear. He who wants such a peace to prevail will only have to abide by implementing the contents of the Madrid formula, which will continue to be the basic pillar of any effort to achieve a just, comprehensive peace.

TISHRIN also comments on the al-Asad-Clinton summit. It affirms that the summit will give a very strong boost to the peace process. This is because, according to U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, Syria is a main player in the region and has a very important role with regard to the achievement of a comprehensive peace in the Middle East.

TISHRIN adds that this U.S. acknowledgement of Syria's sincere cooperation to render the peace process successful did not rise from a vacuum. Rather, it is based on the experiences of two years of talks in Washington, during which Syria provided an example in the quest for a just, comprehensive peace in the Middle East. Only a genuine peace can hold fast in the face of events and changes. The paper says that Syria has never sought separate deals, nor has it been involved in maneuvers or bargains. Rather, its main concern is to establish a firm peace which leads to a Middle East peace and improves the world peace climate. For over two years, Syria has warned against the course of separate deals and unequivocally proved that such deals do not make peace.

TISHRIN adds: Syria's past and present announcements are shared and approved by all peace advocates. Syria firmly believes that for peace to hold in the face of events and developments, it should be just, fair, and comprehensive. A just, comprehensive peace requires Israel's full withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories and recognizing the Palestinian people's basic rights.

TISHRIN indicates that Syria has a genuine interest in peace, as does the United States and the world. Stability in the Middle East is vital for world stability. World peace will remain incomplete without peace in the Middle East. However, peace does not depend on Syria and the Arab parties alone. It requires a substantial change in the Israeli position and a categorical Israeli commitment to the implementation of relevant UN Security Council resolutions, something which has not happened so far.

Concluding its comment, the paper says that for its part, Syria will do all it can in the interest of a just, comprehensive peace. In this context, the United States is called upon to employ its influence, which is very great, to make Israel accept the resolutions of the international legitimacy as a basis and a framework for peace leading to the establishment of rights and an end to the occupation and the acts of repression and terrorism against the Palestinian people.

On the same subject, AL-THAWRAH runs a commentary under the headline "The Summit of Hope." It says: On the eve of President Clinton's European tour, which he will

conclude with the summit meeting with President Hafiz al-Asad in Geneva, U.S. Secretary of State Christopher emphasized Syria's important role in the quest for a comprehensive peace in the region. He said that this pivotal role renders the Geneva summit extremely important, something that will affect the overall peace process. He also reiterated his country's commitment to an honest and sincere full-partner role.

AL-THWARAH believes that what Christopher has said reflects the unchanging U.S. position on the issue of a comprehensive and just peace on all fronts of the conflict. It also proves that Washington is not convinced of the usefulness of partial solutions and separate deals that are held in secret and away from the formula and bases of the Madrid conference.

The paper says that although it welcomed the Gaza-Jericho agreement, the U.S. Administration still believes that any attempt to impose an incomplete solution that bypasses Syria's role and that is not in line with its vision and concept of the nature, bases, and requirements of peace, will have grave consequences for the region's security and stability.

AL-THAWRAH says that the U.S. Administration is certainly aware of Syria's credibility in the peace process and the extent of Syria's seriousness about working to establish the aspired peace.

Israel's Attempts To 'Disturb' Summit Seen

JN0801094194 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0545 GMT 8 Jan 94

[Press review]

[Text] Under the headline "The Issue is in Safe Hands," AL-THAWRAH writes about the atmosphere preceding the awaited summit between President Hafiz al-Asad and U.S. President Bill Clinton mid-January. AL-THAWRAH says: Perhaps it is not surprising that we are seeing desperate attempts and various techniques to disturb the summit. In this context, we understand Israel's statements—or rather threats—yesterday about a military escalation in southern Lebanon on the eve of the summit to influence its results within the framework of a persistent endeavor to change its results or derail it.

AL-THAWRAH adds that yesterday's statements by an Israeli military commander concerning an escalation in Lebanon and attributing such an escalation to a Syrian wish to strengthen its position, as he alleges, are an explicit Israeli threat to hold Syria responsible for the consequences in advance.

AL-THAWRAH affirms that such attempts will not cease. The Israeli circles and the media under their influence are not short of means to put pressure on the summit in an attempt to confuse the U.S. decisions that Clinton will carry to Geneva. This is especially since, based on experience, they know well who Hafiz al-Asad is and what exceptional communication skills he possesses, skills that will enable him to convince President Clinton of the fairness of our cause and of our nation's right to restore the occupied territories.

AL-THAWRAH adds: Fairness and rights are the central issue that this exceptional leader, Hafiz al-Asad, will carry to the Geneva summit. They realize, and so does the entire world, that Hafiz al-Asad in Geneva is not Syria's president and not an interlocutor with Clinton on behalf of Syria. Rather, the importance of the summit basically stems from the fact that President al-Asad will not speak for or represent Syria alone. Nay, he is the pan-Arab president who will carry the entire pan-Arab issue to the table of negotiations with Clinton in Geneva.

AL-THAWRAH adds: That is what al-Asad stands for, that is what he represents, and that is how he dealt with the three other U.S. Presidents with whom he met—Nixon, Carter, and Bush. The issues that the three other summits dealt with were in fact comprehensive, pan-Arab issues concerning the right of all Arabs to peace and fairness. The upcoming summit will also be like this.

Concluding, AL-THAWRAH says: Here again, is the exceptional importance of the upcoming Geneva summit. The entire world is aware of the exceptional importance of this summit, and it is definitely so.

TISHRIN comments on the recent Israeli statements expecting an escalation of tension in southern Lebanon prior to the Syrian-U.S. summit in Geneva mid-January. TISHRIN explains that Israel has never ceased its attacks on Lebanon. Hardly a day goes by without a southern Lebanese village being subjected to artillery shelling or an air raid.

TISHRIN affirms that Israel is dissatisfied with the convocation of the Syrian-U.S. summit. This is simply because the objective of the summit is to boost the process leading to a comprehensive Middle East peace. Israel does not want peace. It wants to firmly entrench the occupation, continue the settlement activity, and drag Arab sides into separate deals, such as the case with the Palestinian side. Israel also wants to inflame the situation in southern Lebanon. This, the Israeli officials believe, would help cast doubts about the usefulness of the Syrian-U.S. summit.

TISHRIN says that if Israel is really interested in peace rather than inflaming and exploding the situation, why does it not accept the relevant UN Security Council resolutions and cooperate with the U.S. initiative and international efforts to establish a firm, durable, and comprehensive Middle East peace? Why does Israel not help render U.S. President Bill Clinton's move successful by declaring its readiness to fully withdraw its troops from the occupied Arab territories and to trade these territories with a genuine, firm peace?

TISHRIN says: Syria and Lebanon have spent two years of talks in Washington, but they saw nothing from the Israelis except maneuvering, procrastination, and security pretexts. This is as if Israel's security can only be ensured by threatening the security of Syria and Lebanon and by continuing the occupation of their territories.

Concluding, TISHRIN says: Needless to say, Israel's record in southern Lebanon is black and full of crimes. The Lebanese have not yet forgotten the deportation of the entire population of the south during the recent aggression nor Israel's public announcement that it wants to create a new refugee problem in the Middle East. Proceeding from these facts, the Lebanese rule out nothing. Israel is experienced in aggression and in pretending to be an innocent victim.

Full Israeli Withdrawal From Golan Demanded

JN0901181494 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1230 GMT 9 Jan 94

[Station commentary]

[Text] Gentlemen, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin is again whistling the old tune on the nature of peace. As usual, he claimed that Syria has not clarified the nature of the peace it seeks to establish in the region and adds that Israel will not agree to a complete withdrawal from the Golan and to the evacuation of the settlements but to a withdrawal on the Golan in exchange for a complete peace.

The truth is that, since the launching of the U.S. initiative, Syria has explained that it aspires to a just and comprehensive peace in the region and to the settlement of all the aspects of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Syria has submitted practical, objective, and balanced proposals since the sixth round to translate the UN Security Council resolutions and the peace for land principle into tangible reality. Syria, also announced through its foreign minister that it is ready for a full peace in exchange for a full withdrawal. However, the Israeli officials who have done their best since the Madrid conference to undermine the Washington talks and raise obstacles and obstructions have so far rejected the formula of a just and comprehensive peace. They did not abide by the UN Security Council resolutions and insist on partial settlements and peace in installments. When Rabin speaks about withdrawal on the Golan, he refers to a partial and limited withdrawal and wants a full peace in return.

This is so in spite of the fact that Syria had informed all the parties concerned that the Golan is nonnegotiable and that peace depends on Israel's full withdrawal. Rabin wants to share the Golan with Syria. The Golan has been Syrian land since time immemorial and cannot be divided. The UN Security Council resolutions are clear. They demand a full Israeli withdrawal, do not permit the forcible seizure of the land of others, reject the settlement operations and the transformation of the landmarks of the occupied territories.

Syria is fully committed to the implementation of Resolutions 242 and 338, which are the basis of the peace process. Has Israel done the same? Rabin speaks on every occasion about a withdrawal on the Golan and not from the Golan. Thus, he places an insurmountable obstacle before the attainment of any progress on the Syrian track. Syria has announced on every occasion that it rejects partial deals and aspires for a comprehensive peace. Why then does Rabin insist on phased partial settlements and peace in installments? Rabin, actually plans to swallow up part of the Golan. It goes without saying that Syria will not be dragged into such deformed and mutilated settlements and will not give up any inch of its territory. Rabin's statements seek to raise doubts about the feasibility of the Syrian-U.S. summit scheduled to be held in Geneva in the middle of this month. Everyone knows that the United States seeks a comprehensive peace and is in accord with Syria on this. Comprehensive peace cannot be established without Israel's full withdrawal, the removal of the occupation, and the elimination of the settlements in accordance with the international legitimacy resolutions and the principle of exchanging land for peace. But, Israel refuses to withdraw, insists on occupation, and resorts, as usual, to the pretext of security. Security and expansion go together with respect to the Israeli rulers. They have launched many wars of expansion under the pretext of security. They reject peace now under the pretext of security. What peace are they talking about if it will not lead to the elimination of the occupation, the return of the land, and the entrenchment of the right of the dispersed and the refugees to return to their land and properties?

Perhaps, we can see the type of peace Israel wants through the negotiations resulting from the Gaza-Jericho accord. Israel has not conceded a single essential thing to the Palestinians. It insists on entrenching its occupation and hegemony and its control over the crossings, routes, areas, and the Palestinian people's resources.

Everyone agrees that occupation is the opposite of peace. Although the Palestinian side became involved in Israel's schemes, it soon reaped the bitter fruits. It found itself face to face with an endless series of operations of deception and misleading actions.

Syria will certainly not be dragged into such agreements and insists on the meticulous implementation of the UN Security Council resolutions. It will pay no heed to any Israeli proposals that do not contain a full and comprehensive withdrawal from the Golan.

Rabbi: No Restrictions Remain on Syrian Jews

PM1201093494 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 11 Jan 94 p 5

[Report on interview with Ibrahim Hamra, chief rabbi of the Jewish community in Syria, by Ibrahim Humaydi in Damascus; date not given]

[Text] Ibrahim Hamra, chief rabbi of the Jewish community in Syria, has said that Syrian authorities have granted 550 exit visas to Syrian Jews wishing to leave the country. He stressed that "no restrictions" are imposed on Jews in Syria and that they are treated like other Syrians.

In an interview with AL-HAYAH, Hamra pointed out that since U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's visit to Damascus and his meeting with President Hafiz al-Asad, after which facilities for Syrian Jews were announced, "some 550 exit visas have been issued at the rate of 30 a day." He pointed out that 350 Jews have not received visas yet, and "I believe that their visas will be issued before the

Syrian-U.S. summit, although most of those who have obtained exit visas will not leave the country."

On the facilities offered to Syrian Jews after the recent al-Asad-Christopher meeting, Hamra said: "Actually there have never been restrictions on the Jews' travel in al-Asad's era. But it is to do with red tape, administrative matters, and bureaucracy. The president's instructions have led to speeding up matters in this connection."

He added that in the past any Jew wishing to travel had to deposit a financial guarantee ranging between 10,000 and 15,000 Syrian pounds in the Central Bank, and entire families used to be banned from traveling.

He stressed that there are now no restrictions, and instructions were issued by President al-Asad after his meeting with Rabbi Hamra in April 1992, lifting all the restrictions. "We can now obtain passports valid for six years and a one-year multiple exit visa without paying any financial guarantee."

He added that in President al-Asad's era we have "enjoyed our dignity and freedom in trade, religion, and culture in every sense of the word." He pointed out that in April 1992 President al-Asad issued an amnesty for sentenced Jews and that "the past was dark for Jews."

Rabbi Hamra pointed out that since the new instructions were issued most Jews have traveled abroad, especially to Brooklyn in the United States, and that some 1,250 Jews out of about 4,000 have stayed in the country. Most of them live in Damascus and in al-Amin Street (1,000 Jews). About 250 Jews live in Aleppo and al-Qamishli and enjoy religious freedom, as there are 22 synagogues in the Syrian capital, two in Aleppo, and one in al-Qamishli. He also said that some of the Jews who left the country have returned because they could not live abroad. "About 100 people and 10 families have returned, even though some of them stayed abroad for some 14 months," while some of the Jews who have been granted exit visas have not left the country.

On his expectations for the Syrian-U.S. summit to be held in the middle of this month, the rabbi said in the interview, which was conducted at the "Jewish School" in al-Amin Street: "I hope all the exit visas will be issued before the meeting. I do not want this issue to be raised in it. I want the meeting to be devoted to issues more important than us." He added: "The time allocated to the meeting should be devoted to more important questions than this issue, because it is resolved."

The rabbi stressed that the "Golan Heights are Syrian territory and must be returned to us as Syrians." He added: "I do not want the Jews issue to assume any political dimension. All I want is to defend the rights of my country (Syria) and the rights of the community."

He expressed his hope that peace will be established in the Middle East Region after the Clinton-al-Asad meeting. "I hope that the results will be positive so that nothing will prevent any Israeli Jew from visiting Syria or any Syrian Jew from visiting Israel." He expressed his hope that there would be no "barriers" in the future, stressing that this can be achieved through "a comprehensive and just peace based on complete withdrawal from the occupied Syrian territory."

Asked whether any Syrian Jew has gone to Israel, Rabbi Hamra said: "I do not believe that any of them has gone there. During my stay in New York I did not hear that any of them is there." However, he pointed out that the Syrian Jews present in Israel are emigrants who left at the beginning of the century. This emigration included Syrians of other religions, as about 40,000 Jews "went there before 1948."

He pointed out that he will soon go to the United States to meet his children and wife who are there, to look after the affairs of the community there, and "to attend the engagement of my daughter, whose fiance I want to be Syrian, even though we are allowed to marry from others." He added that no U.S. rabbi understands Syrian Jews "like I do, because I have been with them since 1976," after succeeding former Rabbi Nasib Andibu [as transliterated].

Afghanistan

Rabbani: War Has Entered 'Decisive Stage'

BK1101154794 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 11 Jan 94

[Text] The Islamic Conference Organization [ICO] has begun fresh initiatives to end the fighting between rival factions in Afghanistan and to establish a durable peace there. Dr. (Ibrahim Hasan Al-Bakr), the special envoy of the ICO secretary general, had extensive talks with representatives of various Afghan organizations in Peshawar today. They exchanged views on all aspects of the ongoing war and new prospects for the establishment of peace. The ICO special envoy urged rival factions to stop the fighting immediately.

Meanwhile, reports from Afghanistan say that sporadic clashes have occurred between government forces and the Dostam militia in the northern and southeastern areas of Kabul. It is reported that the Dostam militia's jet planes bombed various places.

PPI says that Afghan President Professor Borhanoddin Rabbani has declared that the current war in Afghanistan has entered a decisive stage, which will continue until victory is achieved. Talking by telephone from Kabul to a group of Lahore journalists in Peshawar, Rabbani said that the war is not a war to secure power, but a war between the religious and what he called communist forces. The Afghan president claimed that the Hezb-e Eslami [Islamic Party of Afghanistan], the Dostam militia, and Mojaddedi are aligned with Hekmatyar, while all the other big and small organizations are against them. He said that the current war has been forced on the Afghan Government and is harming the Afghan people.

Lafra'i: Hekmatyar No Longer in Government

BK1201091694 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 12 Jan 94

[Text] The Afghan prime minister, Mr. Golboddin Hekmatyar Khan, is no longer a member of the Borhanoddin Rabbani government. In a statement, the minister of state for foreign affairs, Dr. Najibollah Lafra'i, said by attempting the coup, Mr. Hekmatyar has brought about a situation in which it will be self-contradictory and incompatible to further consider him as being part of the government. The minister's statement was released by the Afghan Embassy in New Delhi.

'Warmongers,' Stingers, Other Equipment Captured

LD1101145094 (Clandestine) Radio Message of Freedom in Pashto to Afghanistan 0730 GMT 11 Jan 94

[Text] Reports from Balkh Province state that presently the situation in various parts of the province is calm and war [word indistinct] of the warmongers has been crushed. The report adds that Mazar-e Sharif city, Balkh district, and [words indistinct] parts of Balkh Province have been completely cleared of the presence of the warmongering forces in [words indistinct]. [Words indistinct] states that during a one-day long operation in Mazar-e Sharif and its suburbs some 16,045 kalashnikovs, 55 rocket launchers, one 72-mm [word indistinct] artillery, 10,000 [word indistinct], (?10) Stinger units, 6 mortars, 23 communication units, 50 military transport vehicles, and 4 tanks have been seized by security forces of Mazar-e Sharif city.

Also the Marmul area has been completely cleansed of the warmonger coalition forces. Some 1,000 troops of the warmongers in Mazar-e Sharif and Marmul Valley have been captured, 500 have been killed and wounded, and 300 have surrendered to mojahedin and security forces. [words indistinct] which took place in Balkh district in [word indistinct] of Jadi [December-January] of the current year, 10 armored tanks, 4 air defense guns, [words indistint] and more than 1,000 assorted weapons were seized, along with Mir Hamza, the commander of Balkh district's garrison and a number of his troops [words indistinct].

Hashemi-Rafsanjani Declares Iran Ready To Help

LD1101174694 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 11 Jan 94

[Text] A message from President Hashemi-Rafsanjani has been submitted to President Borhanoddin Rabbani of Afghanistan.

According to a Central News Unit report from Kabul, our country's ambassador to Afghanistan delivered the message at a meeting with Mr. Rabbani, and declared the Islamic Republic of Iran's readiness to help resolve the Afghan civil war. The same report says that Mr. Rabbani, in turn, expressed gratitude for the efforts made by the Islamic Republic of Iran to resolve Afghanistan's problems, and thanked Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani for paying special attention to these matters. He said: We welcome any useful and constructive suggestion in this connection.

The representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran also met Afghan Prime Minister Hekmatyar last night, in order to discuss ways of bringing the recent clashes in Kabul to an end.

Editor Analyzes Roots of Conflict

94P50078A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 5 Jan 93 p 5

["News Analysis" by Amir Taheri]

[Text] London—Each of the Afghan mojahedin groups is striving to achieve the most regional victories and gains possible, before winter makes fighting difficult. For this reason, these competing groups have entered into the most violent battles the country has known in the 20-month-old civil war.

Each group describes itself as "Islamic," and this is a characteristic which they adopted in the 1980's to distinguish the mojahedin from the Communist regime in Kabul supported by the Soviets. This characteristic had an

impact which enabled the mojahedin groups to make religion an opposition ideology in its struggle with the Communist regime of Kabul. It also helped them achieve great support from various Islamic states. In April 1992, after losing Soviet support, the Communist regime fell. The mojahedin groups retained their "Islamic" symbols, but it was quickly evident that the groups were not set up or acting on a religious basis but according to their ethnic backgrounds.

The group led by Borhanoddin Rabbani, the president ad-hoc of the country, calls itself Jam'iat-e Eslami [The Islamic Society], but this group has principly become a political tool to impose Tajik hegemony over Afghanistan. There are, of cours people from other ethnic groups who belong to Rabbani's organization, but the core of the organization remains a group of Tajik Sunni Muslims who speak Persian.

The strong man in this group is Ahmad Shah Mas'ud, the talented military commander who played the decisive role in the fall of the Communist regime headed by Mohammad Najibollah. At that time, hope spread that Mas'ud would use his irrefutable organizational talents and leadership abilities to form a new national alliance and coalition going beyond the ethnic limitations, but nothing of that sort happened.

Rabbani also enjoys the support of Esma'il Khan, the governor of Herat and a former army officer under the Communist regime. Here also, ethnic loyalty, not religious feeling, played the greatest role in determining Esma'il Khan's loyalty to Rabbani and Mas'ud, the two senior Tajik leaders.

It is worth noting that the Tajiks form 30 percent of the population and that they have not been afforded the chance to govern Afghanistan with the exception of six months during which the revolutionary Habibollah Khan, known as "Bacheh-ye Saqa" [son of Saqa], reigned in 1921.

It appears that the Tajiks are now planning to lose no opportunity—as they have vowed historically—afforded them to gain control in the Afghan Government.

The group commanded by "General" 'Abdol Rashid Dos Tam, bears the exalted name of "The Islamic National Party," but it is "Islamic" in name only, because most of its leadership is made up of former Communists who compete in boasting of, spreading, and advertising their heresies. The internal regime and goals of this party are a clear copy of the Communist Party's regime and programs without mentioning the term "Communist."

In the past year, the city of Mazar-i Sharif, the northern city that Dostam has taken for his headquarters, has been an assembly point for former officials, Army officers and cadres of the Communist Party and its regime. However, Dostam's party is also not "national." It is the political organization for those of Uzbek descent, who form 10 percent of Afghanistan's population.

Proof is mounting of the ethnic nature of Dostam's party with the support that has been afforded it by neighboring Uzbekistan. So the party is more an Uzbek organization than it is an organization of Islamic convictions and feelings.

The third group in the current conflict is the "Hezb-e Afghanistan-e Eslami," [Islamic Party of Afghanistan] led by Golboddin Hekmatyar, who officially presumes to be the prime minister, but who has not taken on this role and has no right to do so. However, Hekmatyar's party is increasingly pressing to be the representative of Pashtun political aspirations. In other words, this party is also no more than an organization established on ethnic grounds.

Like Rabbani's party, Hekmatyar's organization includes elements from other ethnic groups, but the sensitive leadership positions are vested in Pashtuns, who form 90 percent of the members of the party. Hekmatyar's party enjoyed the support of both the United States and Pakistan during the war against Soviet hegemony. The major motive for the Pakistani support is that Pakistan itself includes 15 million Pashtuns.

The fourth group in the conflict is an organization that calls itself by the name "Hezb-e Wahdat-e Eslami" [the Islamic Unity Party], but it also uses the term "Islamic" as no more than an emblem or slogan. The truth is that this party is an organization for Afghan Shi'ism supported by Iran. [Shi'ites] form about 18 percent of the Sunni-majority population. It is not a matter of religious doctrine, since the Shi'ites belong to the Hezarah people, an ethnic group of Mongol origin.

Shi'ites in Afghanistan receive support from Iran not only because they are Twelvers, but also because they speak Persian. There are six other parties which, without exception, use the term "Islamic," but all of them are formed on the basis of the ethnic rivalries and use religion as a mere external cover. The Turkomans, Nuristanis, Isma'ilis, and lesser Pashtun tribes have their political parties and organizations, but a penetrating glance at each of them discloses that they are clan organizations, not political parties, and that they have always existed in Afghanistan.

Has Afghanistan become another Somalia then? This question cannot be ignored. The truth is that the religious, ethnic, and tribal divisions in Afghanistan are deeper than they are in Somalia.

Some commentators and analysts are amazed that Hekmatyar's party, which claims to be "Islamic" and is viewed as "fundamentalist," has allied itself now with the former Communists against Rabbani. This is merely a small sample of the Afghan festival. Rabbani allies himself at times also with the Communists to prevent Hekmatyar from imposing his hegemony over Kabul.

The Afghan conflict is rapidly deteriorating into a clan war of the type the country suffered in the 19th Century. Today, Pakistan, Iran, and Uzbekistan have all deeply intervened in the Afghan conflict, and each of them support this or that group. Russia is not far from this stage of conflict. It is known that Russian forces are deployed primarily along the Tajik-Afghan and Turkoman-Afghan borders. Moscow has disclosed in no uncertain form that it

will not accept the idea of the existence of a regime that is hostile to it in Kabul. In spite of the fact that Yeltsin's government pretends that it is anti-Communist, it is working with the new Communist regime in Tashkent and the other in Dushanbe. The main joint goal is the existence of a federal body in Afghanistan enabling all of the ethnic groups to obtain a large measure of independence.

Dostam is promoting the federal formula and is actually practicing it in Mazar-i Sharif, where he is behaving as if his city were an independent statelet. He is hoping that Hekmatyar and Rabbani will destroy each other, thus leaving the field open for the appearance of an Uzbek-Communist-Isma'ili alliance which would become capable of molding the future of Afghanistan. His calculations, however, met a setback when Rabbani decided to launch attacks on Dostam in his stronghold. Dostam's response was to attack Rabbani's positions in Kabul. The following step, logically, was to make an alliance with Hekmatyar.

Perhaps one of the historical divisions which caused the first battle between Rabbani and Hekmatyar to break out is the fact that the latter wanted to arrest Dostam and put him on trial for treason. Hekmatyar had boycotted the government of Sebghatollah Mojaddedi and then that of 'Abdol Sabur Farid because they refused to issue orders to arrest Dostam.

Hekmatyar and Dostam—who has been characterized as "a Communist mercenary and leader of a gang of thieves"—are now two allies pretending to fight for the exaltation of the cause of Islam.

This alliance will not be the last marvel in Afghanistan. This sad country will witness more wonders and restiveness.

Bangladesh

India's Proposals at JEC Meeting Rejected

BK0901095794 Calcutta ANANDABAZAR PATRIKA in Bengali 30 Dec 93 p 1

[By Suman Chattopadhya]

[Text] Dhaka, 29 December—It is not known how the Indian commerce minister, Mr. Pranab Mukherjee, currently visiting Bangladesh will describe his experiences in Dhaka to Prime Minister Narasimha Rao. During his two-day visit to Dhaka to attend the Joint Economic Commission [JEC] meeting it has become clear to Mr. Mukherjee that Bangladesh is not willing to reach any understanding with India on any issue unless the problem relating to the sharing of the waters of the River Ganges is resolved. At present Dhaka's only appeal to Delhi is to resolve the water issue. It is not willing to discuss any other bilateral issues with Delhi until the Ganges water issue is resolved.

The representatives of Bangladesh did not raise the water sharing problem during the JEC meeting held in Dhaka as this issue does not come within the purview of the commission. However, this issue figured prominently during the talks which Mr. Mukherjee had with Bangladeshi leaders outside the JEC meeting. The Ganges water issue came up for discussion and dominated virtually all of the hour-long meeting which Mr. Mukherjee had with Prime Minister Khaleda Zia in Dhaka on December 28. The prime minister requested the Indian minister to see for himself the damage caused to Bangladesh due to the nonavailability of the Ganges waters. She urged the Indian minister to take a personal initiative for a speedy resolution of this issue. Similar sentiments were voiced by other Bangladeshi leaders when Mr. Mukherjee called on them.

The problem relating to the sharing of the Ganges waters with India is a major issue in the politics of Bangladesh. Because of it, the ruling party is reluctant to extend its hands of friendship to India until the problem is resolved. A close aide of the Bangladesh prime minister has said that if the BNP [Bangladesh Nationalist Party] Government is unable to reach an honorable settlement of the water dispute with India before the next general elections, then the party will have to face bitter criticism from its opponents. It would be harmful for the BNP to accept the proposals given by India on other issues before resolving the water dispute. The next general elections in Bangladesh will be held after two years.

Due to this unwillingness of the government, none of the proposals given by India during the JEC meeting, which concluded in Dhaka on December 29, were accepted by the Bangladesh delegation. The proposals which were given by Pranab Mukherjee, who led the Indian delegation to the talks, include: 1) signing of a border trade agreement to prevent illegal trade; 2) signing of a motor vehicles agreement to ensure smooth movement of goods from each other's country by road; 3) the provision of transit facilities to India for the transportation of goods to its northeastern states through Bangladesh. Apart from the above proposals, India also proposed the setting up of two working groups to resolve various matters relating to trade and use of the common border. Though extensive discussions were held on these proposals at the JEC meeting, the Bangladesh side later declined to accept any of them.

The joint press conference at the end of the JEC meeting was addressed by the Bangladesh foreign minister, Mustafizur Rahman, and the leader of the Indian delegation, Pranab Mukherjee. At this press conference the two sides announced that they had decided to reduce the trade gap between the two countries. With this end in view, the Minerals and Metals Trading Corporation of India will import 150,000 tons of urea fertilizer from Bangladesh during the next fiscal year.

It may be mentioned that the relationship between India and Bangladesh is not likely to improve unless both the countries decide to change their current stand. It is the undeclared policy of Bangladesh that it will not negotiate with India on any issue unless the Ganges water problem is resolved. India's position is that the relationship between the two countries will improve after a consensus is reached on various outstanding issues. Given the prevailing situation, the Indian Prime Minister Narasimha Rao is likely to

visit Dhaka soon. This visit is likely to take place at the end of January or early February.

Central Bank Issues Annual Report for 1992-93

BK1101110994 Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 6 Jan 94 p 1

[Text] The Bangladesh economy achieved more success and stability in 1992-93 following the reforms undertaken by the government and the growth during the year was higher as compared to the previous year in spite of the recessionary trend in the developed world. The inflation reduced drastically to record low at 1.3 percent in 1992-93, said the annual report of the Bangladesh Bank for 1992-93 released on Wednesday [5 January].

The Bangladesh Bank report said that the foreign exchange reserve in the country registered an unprecedented increase at 2,121 million U.S. dollar equivalent to six months' import expenditure in 1992-93. But the report depicted a dismal picture in the total investment and said that it did not achieve the desired success in spite of the deregulation and free market economic policies. The reasons for the low investment were attributed to dilatory process in the implementation of the policies, rigid and extra cautious stand of the banking institutions, strict lending policies without risks and introduction of harder rules in the realisation of the bank loans. Total law and order situation and the labour unrest were also shown in the report as other reasons for the slow investment. The entrepreneurs apprehending tough competition in the liberalised foreign trade did not show adequate interest for investment, the Bangladesh Bank report observed.

The rate of the Gross Domestic Production (GDP) registered a growth of 4.3 per cent as against 4.2 per cent in the previous year. The per capita income in 1992-93 stood at 212 U.S. dollar as against 208 U.S. dollar in 1991-92. The report said that the demand for bank loans remained tremendously low as the investment did not gain momentum.

The broad money supply registered a rise of only 10.6 per cent reaching a total of Taka 31,535.6 crore. The money supply increased by Taka 3,009.7 crore in 1992-93.

The foreign exchange reserve in the country registered a rise by 513 million dollar. The rise included receipt of 81 million dollar from International Monetary Fund (IMF), 30 million from IDA [International Development Association], 59 million dollar from Japan. Above that the rise in the remittances from the Bangladesh expatriates and export earning were 84 million and 234 million dollar respectively. The import expenditure increased by 523 million dollar in 1992-93. The reserve money in the Bangladesh Bank increased by Taka 2,082.7 crore. The huge cash of the commercial banks and financial institutions was deposited with the Bangladesh Bank since they could not invest it in the economic activities.

The export earnings in 1992-93 increased by 12.3 per cent over the previous year. The total earning from the export during the year was 2,138 million dollar. The deficit in the current account balance increased to 780 million dollar in 1992-93 from the previous 605 million dollar. The overall surplus in the balance fell by 19 million dollar and stood at 595 million dollar from 614 million dollar.

A total of Taka 814 crore was disbursed in the country as agricultural loan as against Taka 749.59 crore in 1991-92.

In the foreign trade the deficit in 1992-93 rose by 289 million dollar and stood at total 1,848 million dollar. In spite of the increase of 234 million dollar in export earning the import expenditure was higher by 523 million dollar.

In 1992-93, the export earning was 2,138 million dollar while the import expenditure was 3,980 million dollar leaving a total deficit of 1,848 million dollar.

The report apprehended that the effort to make the country self-reliant in food production might be obstructed as the farmers failed to make over the production cost of their produce. This would constraint them to use increased inputs including adequate fertilizer, seeds and pesticides.

India

Contribution to Afghan Peace Initiative Offered

BK1101152294 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1430 GMT 11 Jan 94

[Text] India has called for renewed search for peace and stability in Afghanistan. Expressing deep concern at the recent events there, an External Affairs Ministry spokesman said in New Delhi this has resulted in heavy loss of life and destruction. He called upon the international community and the countries of the region in particular to urgently address the political and security situation in Afghanistan. Reiterating New Delhi's strong support to the unity, integrity, and independence of Afghanistan, he said India is willing to contribute to any such initiative.

Meanwhile, 13 Indian diplomats and staff members in the war-torn Afghan capital, Kabul, arrived in New Delhi today by air from Lahore.

Diplomats Arrive in New Delhi

BK1101125194 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1230 GMT 11 Jan 94

[Text] Indian diplomats and staff members in the war-torn Afghan capital, Kabul, arrived in New Delhi today by air from Lahore. They reached Islamabad on Sunday following a decision taken by the members of the diplomatic community and the United Nations in Kabul to move out from there because of security reasons.

Pakistan's Threat of Nuclear War Dismissed

BK1101154894 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 11 Jan 94

[Text] India today dismissed as motivated Pakistan's threat of a nuclear war in South Asia if the Kashmir issue is not resolved peacefully. Responding to queries from

newsmen on Pakistan foreign minister's statement in Uzbekistan, an External Affairs Ministry spokesman said in New Delhi that Islamabad has only one-point agenda. Its repeated stand on Kashmir issue is also well-known. He said on the other hand, India's position on the issue is crystal clear. Responding to a question, he said India is always open for negotiations to resolve all the outstanding disputes with Pakistan.

Pakistani Nuclear Weapons Program Reviewed

BK0901143094 Delhi THE HINDUSTAN TIMES in English 2 Jan 94 p 17

[By Bal Krishna]

[Text] New Delhi, Jan. 1: Pakistan has accumulated sufficient quantity of weapon grade uranium but its nuclear bomb programme is facing serious problems as the country is finding it hard to procure or develop command and control mechanism to trigger and deliver hhe nuclear device, according to an assessment made by nuclear science experts here.

The experts say Pakistan might have several hundred kgs of weapon grade uranium against the minimum requirement of 15 kg of enriched uranium for a nuclear bomb. But the strategic effectiveness of the Pakistan's nuclear weapons will ultimately depend not so much upon their explosive power as upon the indetectability and accuracy of the delivery system.

The experts say since Pakistan has successfully produced highly enriched uranium, little would apparently stand in the way of its manufacturing nuclear arms except the time that would be needed to develop command and control mechanism to trigger and deliver the nuclear bomb.

They say now Pakistan's efforts to obtain nuclear weapons have gone beyond its production of highly enriched uranium. It has been actively working on nuclear weapons design problems and on the explosive triggering mechanisms and delivery system of nuclear weapons.

Shortly after Pokhran test by India in 1974, the experts say, Pakistan launched a separate effort to acquire the capability for producing highly enriched uranium, the alternative material usable for nuclear weapons.

The key to this secret endeavour was Dr. Abdul Qadir Khan, a Pakistani metallurgical engineer who later became Chief of Pakistan's Atomic Energy Agency. From 1972 to 1975, Mr. Khan worked in the metallurgical section of a Dutch engineering firm, the Physical Dynamics Research Laboratory whose parent company was playing a key role in an ultracentrifuge uranium enrichment plant under construction in the town of Almelo in the Netherlands. The facility was built by the British Dutch-West Germany consortium 'URENCO' to produce low enriched nuclear power plant fuel.

The experts say subsequently it was revealed that Mr. Khan had gained access both to secret technical data concerning the plant's highly classified uranium enrichment process and to detailed lists of equipment used in the facility, all of which he transferred to Pakistan.

Even before Khan had left his post in the Netherlands in 1975, Pakistani nuclear scientists were using the information he had provided to begin purchasing key components for a Pakistani ultracentrifuge pilot plant which was later built in the town of Sihala, southwest of Islamabad.

Later, under Khan's direction, Pakistan initiated construction of an industrial scale plant at nearby Kahuta with thousands of centrifuge units. The experts say later Pakistan was able to obtain as much as 100 metric tonnes of uranium concentrate popularly known as yellow cake not subject to International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) monitoring from Libya. The material had originally been purchased by Libya from Niger and then reexported to Pakistan.

They say Pakistan's first nuclear power plant, known as Karachi Nuclear Power Project, a 137 megawatt, natural uranium/heavy water reactor purchased from Canada, was completed in 1972. It was subjected to IAEA inspections and has capacity to produce nuclear weapon grade material.

After the 1971 Indo-Pak war, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, the chief architect of Pakistan's nuclear programme, decided to develop atomic weapons. Since 1973, the country has been making efforts to acquire reprocessing and uranium enrichment technology both overtly and covertly and finally it was able to commission fuel fabrication plant at Chashma which is not subject to IAEA safeguard, the experts say.

The experts say this gave Pakistan a source of plutonium-bearing spent fuel from which the plutonium could be extracted for weapons in the New Labs reprocessing unit (Near Rawalpindi) or the Chashma reprocessing plant.

Pakistan's principal nuclear research centre is the Institute of Nuclear Science and Technology (PINSTECH). It has British-designed reprocessing laboratory with plutonium output and useful for training the country's technicians in this sensitive field.

They say information about Pakistan's uranium deposits is rather inconsistent and sometimes even contradictory. The country has claimed to have discovered uranium resources in Ghazi Khan Thalkot, Azad Kashmir and Cholistan, with an estimated total of several hundred tonnes.

The experts point out that in light of aid from a neighbouring country and Pakistan's years of weapons design work, a test may not be necessary for the country to have confidence that the nuclear arms will work. There are a number of other reasons which suggest that Pakistan will refrain from declaring that it possesses nuclear arms, the experts added.

Kashmiri Hindus Demand Homeland

94P50077C Bombay NAVBHARAT TIMES in Hindi 25 Dec 93 p 6

[Unattributed article: "Separate State Demanded by Hindus of Kashmir"]

[Text] Dr. Ajay Chrungoo, official spokesman of Panun Kashmir, which is organizing a two-day World Kashmiri Pandit Conference to be held at New Delhi on 27 and 28 December, today demanded a separate homeland for Kashmiri Hindus. He accused the government of ignoring the concerns of this minority community, which had been forced out of its home by Pakistan's activities.

In a press conference he said the government willingly talked with the all-party Hurriyat Conference, and with everyone else, while consciously failing to take note of that component, namely the Kashmiri Hindus, who were the actual victims of the ethnic cleansing in the valley.

The Panun Kashmir spokesman also assailed Amnesty International and Asia Watch, two human rights organizations, for highlighting human rights violations and ethnic cleansing in Bosnia and other places around the World, but not presenting the true picture of Kashmir. He said the two human rights organizations undermined certain basic features of Indian democracy by doing nothing to protect the human rights of the Kashmiri Pandits, who were the victims of the Islamic fundamentalist groups operating in the valley. Pakistan was pushing weapons and ideology into Kashmir for the destruction of peaceful coexistence and harmony, and India had failed to protect the constitutional rights of the Kashmiri Hindus, when they were forced out of their homes by infiltrators. He also said the human rights organizations were preoccupied with excesses committed by the state apparatus. The spokesman said: "Amnesty International and Asia Watch highlight only one aspect and ignore the other, and Amnesty representatives on a visit here some time ago would not give us an appointment to hear our case. Despite provocations, the community has not taken up arms and continues to plead for protection and understanding. We are seeing the extinction of a race that has been living in Kashmir for 5,000 years. Ours is a historical identity. Inspite of all of this, our families are fragmented, and nobody cares for us.

Israeli Minister Meets Singh, Backs Kashmir Stand

94P50077A Bombay NAVBHARAT TIMES in Hindi 25 Dec 93 p 9

[Unattributed article: "Israel Backs India's Stand on Kashmir Issue"]

[Text] Israel supported India's stand on Kashmir unambiguously today. This issue was discussed during a meeting of the Israeli Agriculture Minister, Yaakov Tsur, with the External Affairs Minster, Dinesh Singh. Yaakov is touring India. According to an official spokesman of the External Affairs Ministry, the Israeli minister emphasized that his country "fully and unambiguously" supported India's stand on the Kashmir issue. Dinesh Singh has said that India fully supported the West Asian peace process. He had expressed the hope that it would reach a successful conclusion.

The two leaders held wide-ranging discussions on matters pertaining to agricultural cooperation. The self-appointed leader of the JKLF [Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front], Amanulla Khan, has said in Brussels that Kashmir should be united by the efforts of India and Pakistan, so that a true plebiscite could be held in the future.

Khan was arrested on 18 October in Brussels. He was apprehended with an international warrant based on charges of many killings brought against him by India.

The Indian High Commission in Kuwait has raised vehement objections to accusations of human rights violations in Kashmir made at a conference of intellectuals and ulemas sponsored by the Pakistan High Commission there. According to the Kuwaiti daily ARAB TIMES, a former minister of Kuwait and some professors from the Kuwait University had participated in the conference. According to the newspaper's report, the intellectuals urged the Muslims all over the world to come together to relieve the Kashmiri Muslims of their plight. They had also said at the same time not to think of war as a possible solution. In the meanwhile, 10 people, including six militants, had been killed in the valley, while 45 were wounded in clashes. Police had foiled the efforts to loot a cash van and had arrested 10 extremists, and two more had surrendered on their own accord.

Clinton Letter to KAC Director Criticized

BK1201111194 Delhi INDIAN EXPRESS in English 7 Jan 94 p 1

[By Bharat Bhushan in Washington]

[Text] The Kashmir issue seems set to further strain Indo-US ties with a letter sent by President Bill Clinton to the head of a pro-Pakistan, pro-militant organisation of Kashmiri Americans referring to human rights violations in Kashmir and offering to work with them "to bring peace to Kashmir."

The letter, written on December 27 to Ghulam Nabi Fai of the Kashmiri American Council (KAC), could not have come at a more inopportune time. It comes in the wake of Clinton's raising the Kashmir issue in the UN, the US flip-flop on the Instrument of Accession and the failure of the Indo-Pak talks.

(India reacted to the letter by hoping the US would not ignore gross human rights violations committed by terrorists in Kashmir, aided and abetted by Pakistan, while thinking of peace in the Valley. "We are committed to strengthening the institutions relevant to the upholding of human rights in India," an official said).

The Clinton letter seems to recognise Fai as an interlocutor in the Kashmir dispute. India would find this particularly objectionable as Fai's organisation is widely believed to be funded by Pakistan and is seen as promoting instability in Kashmir.

Fai has made a career out of lobbying against India in US Congress and that is what he gets paid for as KAC executive director. India can, therefore legitimately ask *why a US President* should write to him that he looks forward to working with him.

Fai speaks for people seen as terrorists by most Indians and this is bound to raise questions about where the US stands on terrorism when it does not threaten its own citizens directly.

All the State Department would say about the letter was that it was consistent with the US policy of being willing to assist India and Pakistan on Kashmir. The US—an official said reiterating the Clinton Administration's stand—does not see itself as a mediator unless it is requested for by both nations. Clinton's letter should be seen in that context, he said.

Before getting all hot and sweaty about the letter, it may be pertinent to take a few deep breaths and note that he does not even get to see the thousands of letters he receives and which are responded to with his name appended to them.

A lot of people write to Clinton just as any other head of state and a number of them receive responses. The response to Fai's letter is fairly innocuous at one level and in all likelihood drafted by some bleeding-heart liberal in White House who has no intention of striking one more blow to Indo-US relations.

But this is merely the mechanics of how the letter would have got written. When his name is appended to a letter those responsible for doing so have to be more sensitive about the contents.

After Clinton's infamous reference to Kashmir in the UN and the brouhaha following Assistant Secretary of State Robin Raphel's statement on the Instrument of Accession one would have thought the US Administration would be more careful.

In all fairness after the Raphel statement, the State Department took a reasonable public position. But the White House staff seems to work with its own agenda. And this letter is an example.

Bilateral Agricultural Pact Signed With Israel

94P50077B Bombay NAVBHARAT TIMES in Hindi 25 Dec 93 p 6

[Article: "Pact Signed With Israel To Cooperate In Agriculture"]

[Text] Israel and India signed an agreement today for cooperation in agricultural science and technology, including research, education, developmental projects, and joint ventures.

The Union Minister for agriculture, Mr. Balram Jakhar, and his Israeli counterpart, Mr. Yaakov Tsur, signed the areement, which will result in cooperation between companies or institutions of the two countries through collaborative activities and exchanges.

At a joint press conference following the signing, Mr. Jakhar and Mr. Tsur felt there was vast scope for increasing bilateral cooperation since the restoration of diplomatic relations between the two countries two years ago.

Mr. Tsur stressed on intense cooperation in the field of water and soil management, stating that his country has been recently facing a shortage of water, and Israel would welcome the help of Indian scientists in this field. Israel has been supplying water to the entire country through a 400 km pipeline connecting to a reservoir lake, and India could provide valuable know-how in this field. Israel will make optimal use of water through the drip/sprinkler system developed by Pune's Finnolamb Company, with whom an agreement has been signed. Mr. Jakhar said that Israel will get the system at the same price that the Indian farmers get. He said that there were other areas where Israel has agreed to help India in her developmental projects. It was remarkable how Israel had come up as a forerunner inspite of many serious impediments.

Commenting on the excellent work done by Indian scientists in agricultural research and development, Mr. Tsur said the two countries could cooperate intensively in the fields of plant and animal sciences, farm mechanization, and technology.

Mr. Jakhar called for jointly working for greater agricultural production, through development of hybrid seeds, fertilizers, greenhouse and energy-saving technologies and by developing a marketing infrastructure while making use of Israeli expertise in these areas.

Iran

British Embassy Attacked; Role of MKO Debated

Daily Claims MKO Behind Attack

LD1201115294 Tehran IRNA in English 1023 GMT 12 Jan 94

[Text] Tehran, Jan. 12, IRNA—The English daily TEHRAN TIMES in its editorial Wednesday [12 January] said the terrorist Mojahedin-e Khalq Organization (MKO) was behind the last Sunday attack on the British Embassy in Tehran as it would benefit from Iran's strained diplomatic relations with Western Europe.

Referring to the previous attack on the French Embassy and the Air France office in Tehran on November 9, the paper said, "undoubtedly the two instances of attacks on the foreign embassies in Tehran, involving in both cases European countries, are related to one another and are in fact links in a chain of premediated plots which are carried out with specific objectives."

It stressed that such acts of terrorism are meant "to damage the international prestige of the Islamic Republic."

"In the past few months the Islamic Republic had undertaken active diplomatic initiatives to resolve its problems

with some of the European countries and it had attained great progress in this direction.

"In the majority of cases the diplomatic initiatives taken by the Islamic Republic have been successful, and a broad range of understandings had been achieved. The most concrete sign of the improvement of relations between Iran and the Western Europe is the release of the two Iranian citizens by the French Government," said the article.

It further added, "consequently it is quite logical to conclude that the attacks on the embassies are meant to undermine Iran's recent improved relations with the Western European countries.

"Terrorist acts including attacks on embassies have always been condemned by the Islamic Republic as irrational endeavors which defeat their own purpose."

The editorial in conclusion called for taking concrete measures to forestall any attempt which aims to sabotage Iran's diplomatic achievements and for tightening security measures around embassy compounds.

MKO Refutes Charges, Blames Government

NC1201102194 Paris AFP in English 1004 GMT 12 Jan 94

[Report by Kianousche Dorranie]

[Excerpts] Tehran, Jan 12 (AFP)—Gunmen fired several shots at the British embassy in the Iranian capital causing some damage but no injuries, an embassy spokesman said Wednesday [12 January]. [passage omitted]

The attack first came to light earlier the same day with a report in the English-language Tehran Times newspaper which blamed it on Iran's main armed opposition group, the Mojahedin-e Khalq [MKO].

The attack was a "premeditated plot to damage" Iran's prestige and undermine its "recent improved relations with European countries," it said.

The Mojahedin, in a statement sent to AFP in Nicosia, denied the charge as "absurd" and countered that the attack was the work of the Iranian government.

"With the deepening of the regime's economic and political crises, Khomeyni's heirs have found the only recourse in stepping up domestic suppression and terrorism," it said. [passage omitted]

Sunday's shooting comes amid on-going tension in relations because of the death sentence issued by Iran's late spiritual guide Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeyni against British writer Salman Rushdie.

President Urges Afghan Mojahedin To Unite

LD1201113994 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 12 Jan 94

[Excerpt] Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani has stressed the continued support of the Islamic Republic of Iran for the oppressed people of Afghanistan. He said: The only way to salvage and reconstruct Afghanistan is to revive the spirit of selflessness and sacrifice, and to encourage the jehadi groups to unite around the axis of Islam.

Addressing the participants in today's session of the third assembly of poetry on Islamic revolution in Afghanistan, the president referred to 14 years of jehad and struggle by the Afghan people against the occupiers, and their eventual victory over one of the world's largest powers. He considered this victory as a glorious historical chapter and a glittering episode in the life of the people of Afghanistan. He said that this was the result of the nation's sacrifices, and the presence of the spirit of cooperation and unity among them.

Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani expressed concern over the present situation in Afghanistan where increasingly more damage is being caused as a result of the spread of war and bloodshed in that country. He said: Given the Islamic homogeneity of the Afghan nation, and the presence of the ethos of faith and hard work among them, the present situation in that country has in effect marred the shining record of the Islamic struggles of the nation, and will no doubt leave negative and undesirable traits in the history of that country.

The president added: If the foundation for all action is built on the use of force and military might, then the process of bloodshed and destruction will intensify, and discord and hostility among different groups will spread. Afghanistan, however, cannot endure any more damage.

Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani then said that the spiritual power and influence of our late imam [Khomeyni], both before and after the Islamic revolution, had acted like a guiding light for the Muslim nation of Iran. The safeguarding of this guiding light, he added, is a role that is being fulfilled by the eminent leader [Khamene'i] at present. He said: The leaders of jehadi groups must consciously obey a single leader chosen from their midst. In this way they will be able to safeguard the achievements of the Islamic revolution of Afghanistan, and find the opportunity to repair the damage and reconstruct their country. [passage omitted]

Media Comment on Clashes in Afghanistan

Cooperation Among Factions Urged

NC1201071694 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0445 GMT 12 Jan 94

[Commentary prepared by the News Research and Commentary Group]

[Text] Diplomatic activities have started to end the recent battles in Afghanistan, particularly those in Kabul city. Our ambassador in Kabul met heads of some of the conflicting groups yesterday and expressed our country's readiness to mediate between the belligerent groups to end the conflict and establish peace and tranquility in Afghanistan.

The Islamic Republic of Iran has repeatedly expressed its concern over any conflict in Afghanistan, whatever its reason, and supports a political solution. The Iranian nation and Government, acting according to their canonical duties, supported the just struggles by the mojahedin during the 14 years of their jehad against the communists and extended financial and material assistance to it. During the same period, they also hosted 2 million Afghan refugees.

The Afghan mojahedin's victory in the war against blasphemy and atheism made the Iranian nation happy, since expectations then were that Islamic rule in Afghanistan would be established and the two Muslim neighboring countries, which share historic, religious, and cultural characteristics, could live in tranquility next to each other. Despite these expectations, bloody clashes among rival groups that once fought against the communists on one front, concerned the Iranian nation. So, the Iranian Government—as a friendly, neighboring, and Muslim country—considers it its duty to spare no effort to end the conflict in that country.

Islamic Iran has always wanted Afghanistan's unity and territorial integrity and, having adopted a policy of not interfering in others' domestic affairs, it considers cooperating and coordinating with friendly Muslim countries to overcome their problems to be among the principles of its foreign policy.

Afghanistan is facing state organizational problems, problems in economic reconstruction and in establishing social law and order, the problem of refugees, and fuel and food problems. The Islamic Republic of Iran has always expressed its readiness to help the Afghan nation to overcome any need it has.

Hopefully, cooperation by friendly, Muslim, and neighboring countries can help to end the clashes in Afghanistan and stability and tranquility can be returned to Afghanistan. But success in this calls for cooperation and coordination among the jehadi forces.

Daily Faults Afghan Leaders

LD1201104294 Tehran IRNA in English 1002 GMT 12 Jan 94

[Text] Tehran, Jan. 12, IRNA—An English daily Wednesday [12 January] editorialized on clashes in Afghanistan and said it is time for different factions to get together for the sake of Islam to save their country.

The daily KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL said Central Asian Republics were aspiring to follow the heroism of the Afghans against the "Russian bear" and through cooperation make the region into a strong bastion of resurgent Islam.

Unfortunately, it said, "the leaders in Afghanistan have turned out to be lesser beings with inflated ego, ready to infringe upon the rights of others and cut each other's throats at the behest of outside forces.

"To make outsiders happy they are even indifferent to the plight of the innocent peace-loving populace whose hopes and aspirations after the end of communist rule, were soon dashed by the much acclaimed victors of the unequal war," the article stressed.

However, commented the article, it is not too late to find a remedy to the blood-curdling bickerings for power, adding that the first thing the Afghan groups should realize is that national reconciliation and not un-Islamic rivalries for domination of the country is the need of the hour.

"Time and again Iran has shown its brotherly intentions of healing rift, and in the spirit of true Islamic brotherhood likes to see a strong and stable Afghanistan as its neighbor," the daily noted.

The paper concluded by saying it is now up to the warring factions to continue their "self-destructive dance" and feel accountable before God for the wanton devastation of a nation, or to regain their senses and strive in earnest in the interests of peace and prosperity.

Editorial Criticizes Clashes

NC1201095394 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 3 Jan 94 pp 1, 2

[Editorial: "Once Again a Power Struggle in Kabul!"]

[Excerpts] The power struggle in Kabul continues to take its toll with the conflicting factions resorting to all their military resources to annihilate or at least to defeat the other side.

The arms that were gathered once in the name of the Afghan jehad by its forces, plus the arsenals that were inherited from the Kabul regime, are now being used for an extensive massacre of rival jehadi groups. Those groups that were not so insistent on wasting their arms so inconsiderately during the 14 years of jehad as they are now are showing surprising generosity and are resorting to missile, artillery, and other deadly attacks against each other.

Actually, the canons, mortar, and missiles that they did not use during the 14 years of jehad are now being used without any limit to force the other jehadi forces to kneel. Under such conditions, it is the people in Kabul and in all of Afghanistan who are the main losers in the inauspicious war and in the regrettable confrontation. [passage omitted]

The Islamic Republic of Iran has expressed its regrets over the renewed fighting in Kabul and has called on the belligerent sides to end their clashes and to seek peaceful means to solve their problems.

The truth is that the jehadi forces have never been able to correctly understand the oppressed Afghan people's wish to begin the era of reconstruction under the banner of Islam and they have never acted appropriately on the heavy responsibility that they shoulder. All this has led to the Afghan people's disillusionment since none of the jehadi forces has been able to fulfill their pure wishes.

It was not, and is not, logical for the fruits of 14 years of the Afghan nation's struggles to be considered as "war booty"

and for each group to want to gain as much of this booty as possible and to trample on the blood that was shed by 1.5 million martyrs during these struggles.

It is bitter but true that some jehadi groups are showing the kind of determination to annihilate their rivals that they did not show during the jehad and are more hasty in taking revenge on their jehadi rivals than they were even at the climax of the jehad. The role played by the time-serving forces and those groups who shift their support to one group or another as conditions call for is perceptible today more than ever before. But the question is: When will Afghanistan be freed from such regrettable clashes?

There may not be a clear answer to this question. But everyone knows that the jehadi forces are willing to pay any price to annihilate or to defeat each other. Even if this war of attrition is temporarily stopped, it will still be like ember under ashes for a long time to come, and it is precisely because of this that it is in the interest of Afghanistan and of the oppressed Afghan people that the wise begin to act to bring the views of the jehadi forces closer and not to waste more time in extinguishing a flame that is destroying the entire Afghan nation.

Regional Official on Trade With Afghanistan

NC1201112694 Mashhad EQTESAD-E KHORASAN ECONOMIC WEEKLY in Persian 1 Jan 94 p 3

[Interview with Engineer Ahmadi, director general of the Economic Department in Khorasan Governorate, by unidentified correspondent; place and date not given: "A New Look at the Economic Relations Between Herat and Khorasan"]

[Text] The outlook on economic and commercial relations between Khorasan and Herat Provinces has become quite hopeful following the exchange of high-level provincial delegations during the past year. The subsequent meetings that resulted in the signing of cooperation protocols and, in some cases, of agreements indicate that these two contiguous provinces have frequent and close exchanges. It can be stated that economic and commercial moves have been initiated and are continuing but that these moves are not as dynamic as had been envisaged.

The reason for this slow pace is the political situation in Afghanistan, especially in its central government. The government has not been able to establish a security framework and is still grappling with acute political problems, which is why it is paying less attention to economic issues.

On the other hand, the political fervor is not the same all over Afghanistan. There is more stability in Herat Province than there is in the capital, which is why economic and commercial relations with Khorasan are at the present level and are expected to expand.

To become better acquainted with the current relations between Herat and Khorasan, our correspondent interviewed Engineer Ahmadi, the director general of the Economic Affairs Department of the Khorasan Governorate, and we draw our readers' attention to the detailed text of this interview:

[EQTESAD-E KHORASAN] Could you please tell us about the economic protocols [preceding word in English] signed between the Provinces of Herat and Khorasan and to what extent they have been implemented? What results have been achieved so far?

[Ahmadi] I should say that the economic protocols were signed to activate commercial relations in the private sector and that the trading companies in these provinces have become active. This is borne out by the customs statistics, and the exchange of commodities is continuing. Some of these agreements are based on offering technical and engineering services, as well as technological training and research matters, such as reconstruction of industrial and agricultural installations, planning, revival of fields, and repair of water sources. Some work has been done on this matter. A report on this subject has been submitted to the relevant officials and the necessary allocations have been made. These plans will be implemented as soon as the other side expresses its willingness to provide funds and designate the necessary backing. Of course, some of the agreements regarding the provision of free development services, pharmaceuticals, and pesticides for plant diseases and seed-yielding plants have been implemented.

[EQTESAD-E KHORASAN] What is the situation on the transit of goods between Herat and Khorasan Provinces?

[Ahmadi] The agreement on the transit of goods between the two countries expired last year and it took quite a while to extend it, but this was eventually done with the cooperation of Khorasan officials. Fortunately, it was approved in the Islamic Majles and the transit of goods continues between the two countries. The ingress and egress routes of these goods do not face any legal problems and traffic is continuing.

[EQTESAD-E KHORASAN] There was mention of the establishment of joint border markets in the agreements between the provinces of Herat and Khorasan. Will this happen in the near future?

[Ahmadi] Yes. It was mentioned in the agreements that joint border markets would be set up on the border in Eslam-qal'eh and Do Gharun and an agreement was signed on this matter. We have repeatedly expressed our willingness on the subject but Herat officials have stated that their final concurrence depends on approval by Kabul officials, and no results have been announced so far. However, there is no problem on our side. As soon as the other side expresses its willingness, we will be ready to set up the border market. We have set up border stores in Do Gharun unilaterally, which are very active and sell items required by returning Afghan refugees at reasonable prices to expedite the return of the refugees and to cater to their needs. These stores are relatively prosperous.

[EQTESAD-E KHORASAN] Do the economic agreements only include Herat Province or do they encompass the other parts of Afghanistan as well?

[Ahmadi] No. The agreements are not exclusively for Herat Province and Iranian traders are active in other parts of Afghanistan as well. Some of our transportation companies have succeeded in setting up offices in Herat and the exchange of goods with Herat, Heyratan, and Mazar-e Sharif continues.

[EQTESAD-E KHORASAN] In the current conditions prevailing in Afghanistan, do you think that the necessary security exists regarding industrial and commercial investment?

[Ahmadi] Of course, the economic officials of the two countries have announced their readiness to implement some of the protocols, such as putting the installations in Herat into operation, or joint investment in industrial and agricultural projects. We are optimistic that conditions will soon be conducive to their implementation. Afghanistan is currently in a transitional state and is moving from one set of circumstances to another, while the government is seeking to consolidate its position. It has to compile a new set of regulations and needs coordination.

For this reason the implementation of new accords is being pursued with greater caution. As I stated earlier, since we opened our offices of representation our relations have flourished and, God willing, this will be a precursor to the implementation of agreements. It would be more expedient to act after reviewing the situation and the current circumstances.

[EQTESAD-E KHORASAN] How far has the repair and renovation of highways progressed?

[Ahmadi] According to the latest reports from the governorate's technical office, the road has been paved and is ready for asphalting. [preceding word in English] A segment of it had been scheduled for asphalting but it was postponed, probably because of the onset of cold weather and the need for a survey by the contractors.

[EQTESAD-E KHORASAN] It has been decided that Khorasan Province would hold an industrial and trade exhibition in Herat Province. Could you elaborate on that?

[Ahmadi] Regarding the forging of economic relations with neighboring countries, we consider the convening of trade and industrial exhibitions as the first step toward progress in this path, whether it is for the sale of goods or for the exchange of expertise.

It was for this purpose that Khorasan Province announced its readiness to set up an exhibition in Herat Province a year ago. As soon as the go-ahead is given, and the other side is ready, we will immediately hold the exhibition.

[EQTESAD-E KHORASAN] Have any measures been taken on banking relations?

[Ahmadi] Some officials visited Herat to discuss the establishment of a branch of Saderat Bank and talks were held on the subject. We still await the other side's concurrence and we hope that a branch of the bank will be set up in Herat.

[EQTESAD-E KHORASAN] Thank you very much.

Tehran Ready To Continue Talks With UAE

LD1201070794 Tehran IRNA in English 0649 GMT 12 Jan 94

[Text] Tehran, Jan. 12, IRNA—The Islamic Republic of Iran is ready to continue talks with the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and receive officials from that country, a Foreign Ministry spokesman said Wednesday [12 January].

The spokesman, Mahmud Mohammadi, termed the statement issued by the recent Damascus meeting on the Iranian islands as repetition of the "baseless claims by the UAE over the islands".

Foreign minister of the (Persian) Gulf Cooperation Council, (P)GCC, and their counterparts from Egypt and Syria concluded a two-day meeting in Damascus, Syria, on January 10 without reaching any result.

"We pay attention to that part of the statement of the Damascus meeting which mentions friendly neighborhood and elimination of disputes through peaceful talks and declare our readiness to continue talks and receive officials from the UAE," said Mohammadi.

"However," he added, "it is the UAE which has not responded positively to Iran's readiness to continue bilateral talks." He deplored that the UAE Government on the one hand emphasizes on mutual talks to settle misunderstandings between the two countries but on the other hand does not take any practical step in this connection.

It should be noted that Iran has repeatedly welcomed the visit to Tehran of the UAE officials to hold talk on the settlement of misunderstandings between the two countries without any prejudgements.

However, the UAE officials have not yet responded to the good-will shown by Iran which is of importance for the strengthening of the friendly neighborhood and stability in the region.

Editorial on Israel Giving Arms to 'Arafat

NC1201104694 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 29 Dec 94 pp 1, 15

[Editorial: "The Zionists Are Digging Their Own Grave!"]

[Text] Israel has made new decisions on confronting the Islamic forces in Gaza and Jericho and intends to arm 'Arafat's forces so that they can carry out their mission of crushing the intifadah and annihilating Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] as best as possible.

Parallel to this decision, the Zionist regime has taken the unexpected step of calling on European countries to help 'Arafat's faction and the compromising PLO faction in crushing the intifadah. Irrespective of all the objectives that Israel expects this new plan to achieve, all facts show

that the situation in the occupied territories, especially in Gaza and Jericho, are detrimental to both 'Arafat and Israel.

Under such conditions, arming 'Arafat's mercenaries to crush the intifadah and Hamas is the biggest mistake that the enemy has made. The Islamic forces will have more golden opportunities to more easily acquire the arms that they need for their anti-occupational operations.

The truth is that the Zionists have lost control of the situation in occupied Palestine, and with their current action they show how disappointed they are with their past efforts and are even prepared to arm people who can easily change stances and act against the Zionists. Even though having arms in the occupied territories under the current conditions can solve many of the Palestinians' complicated problems in their confrontation with the occupying enemy, nevertheless the more major issue that reveals the vulnerability of Israel and 'Arafat's compromising faction is that even among his ranks there are many who are dissatisfied with the situation and do not endorse the continuous treacheries of 'Arafat and the other compromising leaders of the PLO. Naturally, these people are waiting for suitable opportunities to be able to avenge themselves and the Palestinian people on occupying Israel.

It is precisely because of this that, despite 'Arafat's treason and the concordance between some of the compromising heads of the PLO and the Zionists, not a great deal has changed in Israel's favor and developments in the occupied territories leave much to be desired for the occupiers.

The Zionists are digging their own graves today and this golden opportunity for the Palestinians to acquire arms can herald a more bitter tomorrow for the occupiers.

This disgraceful game between Israel and 'Arafat is so idiotic that it has been defeated and has disgraced the enemies of Islam in dear Palestine even in its initial stage. Who knows? Maybe it is written that the Zionists will be killed by bullets that are fired from their own guns!

Papers Comment on Damascus Meeting

LD1201143594 Tehran IRNA in English 1047 GMT 12 Jan 94

[Text] Tehran, Jan. 12, IRNA—Two morning Persian-language dailies here Wednesday [12 January] editorialized on the recent 6 + 2 meeting in Damascus with one interpreting Syria's participation as a blow to its political dignity and the other stressing that regional security can be safeguarded only by the Persian Gulf littoral states.

Commenting on the failure of the meeting, held early this week, to achieve a result, the daily 'ABRAR' said that the Syrians accepted to attend the 6 + 2 due to their expanded disputes with Baghdad regime.

The paper draw the attention of the Syrian statemen to the fact that since the U.S. looks at 6 + 2 as a 'club' for those favoring the compromise trend in the Middle East, Syria's particiaption in such a group might be interpreted as a blow to the political dignity of an independent progressive country.

If the U.S. will be able to join Damascus to Tel Aviv there would be no problem, otherwise, said the paper in conlusion, Syria would have no place among the other seven countries.

Commenting on the same subject 'JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI' referred to the role that Egypt played in the meeting and said Cairo did not waste any attempt to sow seeds of suspicion over the future of Iran's cooperation with regional countries.

"It has always tried to frustrate any proper effort for regional cooperation by creating a state of pessimism and concern among the regional states."

As far as Iran is concerned, added the daily, the Islamic republic has never interfered in internal affairs or decision-making of its arab or other neighboring countries and would never do so in future.

However, the article noted, Cairo was looking for its own interests in the "troubled waters of the Persian Gulf" and in creating tension in Iran's relations with the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council (P)GCC.

The article pointed to the fact that Egypt, due to its severe security crisis and lack of public support, was not able to help the (P)GCC to maintain regional security and stability.

Time has proven that regional security should be only maintained by the region's littoral states and any attempt to neglect such a concrete reality would only ruin "golden opportunities" for preserving regional security and might, it concluded.

Iraqi Cease-Fire Violations Reported to UN

LD1201104094 Tehran IRNA in English 0947 GMT 12 Jan 94

[Text] United Nations, New York, Jan. 12, IRNA—Twenty four civilians and military personnel were killed, four wounded and four kidnapped during attacks by counterrevolutionary groups on Iranian forces in southern and western border regions of the country from 1 to 8 September.

In a letter to the U.N. Secretary General, Butrus Butrus-Ghali, Deputy Permanent Representative of Iran to the U.N. Gholam 'Ali Khosrow blamed the Iraqi regime for being responsible for the attacks and termed such violations as explicit breach of ceasefire between the two countries.

The letter, circulated as a U.N. Security Council document on Tuesday [11 January], reported 60 cases of ceasefire violations, 35 of which were carried out by counterrevolutionary groups against border forces and regional villagers.

In eight cases Iraqi helicopters flew over the areas under the influence of anti-revolutionary groups.

Trafficking of Iraqi tugboats opposite Khorramshahr port in the Arvand river and in one case penetration of an Iraqi speed boat to the Bahmanshir river mouth, in east of Abadan, and the shooting of its civilian crew at Iranian forces were other cases of violation.

Construciton of observation posts, installation of tents in the no man's land, digging canals, installation of barbed wires and machine guns at border posts are reported in the letter.

Also, infiltration into the Iranian territory, carrying out ambush activities, attack on border outposts and patrol vehicles of Iranian forces, kidnapping civilian residents, entering villages and threatening residents to avoid cooperation with Iranian forces, planting mines were among other cases of cease-fire violation.

The letter mentioned attacks on a group of Iranian forces by anti-revolutionaries who penetrated into Iranian territory on September 23 as a result of which eight troopers were killed and six others wounded.

Anti-revolutionary groups also attacked a vehicle belonging to the Geographical Institute in Bariso district on September 6 and two groups of Iranian forces on September 16 and 24, killing seven military personnel and civilians.

The letter further added that an Iranian patrol vehicle was attacked on September 17 as a result of which a sergeant was killed and two soldiers accompanying him were abducted in Kanishaikh region.

Another soldier who was on guard duty at the Chilat observatory post was abducted, roads were barricaded in the general region of Banneh and two local residents were arrested and taken to Iraq by anti-revolutionary groups, it said.

In eleven cases, anti-revolutionary groups fled to Iraq after being identified and encountered by Iranian forces.

Six anti-revolutionary people who had penetrated into Iran in the Ghale-Rash region, south of Sardasht, to plant mines in the area fled to Iraq after facing civilian residents.

Editorial Denounces 'Savage Massacre' of Kurds

NC1101163194 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 4 Jan 94 pp 1, 14

[Editorial: "Behind the Curtain of Massacre in Iraqi Kurdistan"]

[Text] The wretched hands of America, Turkey, and France are clearly visible in the savage massacre that is taking place against the Muslim Kurds in Iraq.

The wave of massacre of Kurdish Muslims adopts its true meaning when viewed precisely within the framework of plots by arrogance which are aimed at the dismemberment of Iraq and at creating a reliable base for the West's forces in northern Iraq.

The issue took on a serious nature with the creation of a "safe haven" in Iraq. And it was within the framework of this plan that American and French forces, using Turkish support facilities, tried to dismember Iraqi Kurdistan. The formation of a parliament followed by the establishment of an independent government constituted the next phase in the series of more serious steps by arrogance to create a "second Israel" in the region. And now the Western countries and especially America feel that the Muslim Kurdish forces are obstructing their objectives and that their plans to fully dismember Kurdistan may be foiled.

It is precisely because of this that during its recent talks with Jalal Talabani, Washington made the continuation of military, economic, and security assistances as well as propaganda support for Talabani contingent on getting rid of Islamic Kurdish movements and explicitly called for the uprooting of Islamic groups from northern Iraq.

Turkey too has displayed a nauseating stance on this issue. On the one hand, the Ankara government feels that fanning the flames of secessionist movements in northern Iraq also affects Turkey's national security and has explicitly expressed its concern over joint U.S.-French plans in northern Iraq which specifically come within the framework of creating a safe haven in Iraqi Kurdistan and, on the other, it is tempted to gain access to Kirkuk's oil resources and to play the role of the West's gendarme in northern Iraq.

Public opinion in Iraqi Kurdistan finds it difficult to understand why the Ankara government has started the most savage massacre and suppression of the Kurds in Turkey while at the same time it is being so generous in strengthening the Kurds in Iraqi Kurdistan. Moreover, the officials of the Ankara government have repeatedly used the Iraqi Kurdish leaders to achieve their goals, even during the suppression of the Kurds in Turkey. Turkey even granted Talabani a "Turkish diplomatic passport" and included him in a Turkish delegation that visited Washington for talks.

Even if the Ankara government considers all these things to belong to the past and claims that it has reviewed its past policies, nevertheless the issue is that today operations by America, France, and Britain in Iraqi Kurdistan within the framework of Hammer Force are carried out with the help of Turkish support units, specifically at Incirlik base.

It is now very obvious that from its very outset, the Hammer Force never intended to establish stability and balance in the region; that it has always tried to throw the region off balance, to create instability, and to establish a "second Israel" in the region; and that it has gradually implemented plans that have harmed and will continue to harm Turkey too.

In addition, let us not forget that it has never been possible to establish equilibrium and stability in this sensitive area with a "hammer" and that experience has shown that any abuse of power—and in such a nauseating manner, at that—has only led and will lead to a vicious cycle of uncontrollable events in the entire region.

The major point here is that once again, the Iraqi Kurds have been fooled by America and its other allies; and it is highly possible that this time too they will only realize the depth of the tragedy when it is too late and when even those who consider themselves in control of the situation in Iraqi Kurdistan will have lost control.

Whatever the objectives, methods, and outcome of this disgraceful game, the view of the Islamic Republic of Iran of the incidents in Iraqi Kurdistan, which have been repeatedly pointed out by the officials of the system, can be summed up as follows:

1. The people of Iraqi Kurdistan, like the rest of the Iraqi people, have suffered from tragedies throughout the past few decades, and the solution of their problems cannot be separated from or placed outside the framework of a radical solution to the problems of Iraq.

2. Any type of solution to the problem of Iraqi Kurdistan should be sought within the framework of safeguarding the independence, territorial integrity, and sovereignty of Iraq; and naturally any type of secessionist movement, even under the pretext of saving the Iraqi people from Baghdad's pressures, is unjustifiable.

3. Any decision, movement, or step for solving the problem of the Iraqi people should come from the Iraqi people themselves and should certainly not involve political or military interventions by foreigners. If not, foreigners will get an opportunity to infiltrate the area. Today we see how the Muslim Kurds of Iraq are getting a bloodbath from other groups of Iraqi Kurds and how, within the framework of dismembering Iraqi Kurdistan, once again more people are being expelled from their homes and are facing "forced deportation"; and if they refuse, they have no guarantees that they will stay alive.

All these problems and incidents once again testify to the just, correct, and strong stances of the Islamic Republic of Iran vis-a-vis the problems of Iraq—both as far as the Shiites in the South, the Kurds in the North, and people any other place in this oppressed land are concerned—and it proves that America and its allies are pursuing wretched objectives in the region and only want to exploit the Kurds and others for their own motives.

Western 'Rivalry' Over Saudi Arms Market Viewed

LD1101193994 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1655 GMT 11 Jan 94

[Unattributed commentary]

[Excerpts] Rivalry among Western countries to maintain their share of the Saudi arms market has intensified as Saudi Arabian budget shrinks.

The French prime minister, who has been in Saudi Arabia for the past few days at the head of a military-economic team, hopes, by offering easy payments terms and bilateral oil deals in future, to encourage the authorities in Riyadh to sign three trading and military agreements with France. [passage omitted]

Yet, the Saudi defense minister has so far told the French that their easy terms were not sufficient and that his country, because of the falling oil prices, had to think long before signing any new agreement.

Meanwhile, the British defense minister, who is currently in Saudi Arabia, is trying to clarify the outcome of the agreement for the sale of 48 Tornado planes signed two years ago. [passage omitted]

The British officials fear that because of its shrinking budget, which mainly affects military expenditures, Saudi Arabia may cancel its military contracts and in return the British military industries may face a serious crisis.

Political pundits believe that though the fall in oil prices can help Western countries out of their economic recession, it may, as a by-product, confront the Western military industries with a crisis. [passage omitted]

So long as the West uses various levers to keep oil prices at a low level, oil producing countries will be forced to slow down their purchases from the international market. Such a consequence is a major tragedy for the Western arms industries.

Thus, the fall in oil prices is a two-edged sword in the hands of the Western countries; they will have to clarify their position with regard to that sword.

Commentary on OPEC, Non-OPEC Oil Production

NC1201091094 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0445 GMT 12 Jan 94

[Commentary prepared by the News Research and Commentaries Group]

[Text] There is a strong possibility that OPEC and non-OPEC countries will reduce oil production. The petroleum ministers of the six Persian Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] countries will meet in Bahrain next week to study the outcome of efforts by the Omani petroleum minister. He is contacting non-OPEC members in a bid to urge them to reduce production.

Oil sources have described the Omani minister's contacts as important. Oman is among the non-OPEC members that have accepted reducing production by five percent. Following the drop in oil prices and after meeting the Qatari energy minister, who is also the OPEC secretary general, the Omani petroleum minister left on a series of visits to Yemen, Egypt, Syria, Norway, Britain, and Russia—all non-OPEC countries—and gained their agreement, Norway and Britain excepted, to reduce production.

After the recent GCC summit and the statement of readiness by the GCC heads to reduce oil production, the issue of agreement between OPEC and non-OPEC members has become more serious. Iran has said it is ready to reduce oil

production, stressing that a decision to reduce production can be made within the OPEC framework.

Many oil experts believe that in addition to the economic recession in the West and the West's oil policies, the drop in oil prices is also linked with increased production by non-OPEC members. This has led to efforts to convince these countries to reduce production' in a coordinated manner. The Omani petroleum minister will continue his mission with visits to Brunei, Malaysia, and Mexico within the next few days.

The reduction in oil prices has already affected the budgets of the Persian Gulf Arab countries and made Saudi Arabia, which is the largest oil producer, review its military projects and its astronomic arms purchases. The reduction in the budgets and the scrapping of ambitious military plans by the Persian Gulf countries means a drop in foreign purchases, placing economic pressure on the West's industries and military and nonmilitary finances. So, the Western countries will gradually pay for the damages that their policies on the oil-producing countries have caused.

KUNA reported that the Kuwaiti petroleum minister will discuss oil developments and ways to control oil prices at the meeting of the GCC foreign [as heard] ministers in Bahrain. This shows that in addition to its impact on the economy of the Arab oil-producing countries, the reduction in oil prices may have domestic political consequences for them if left uncontrolled.

Chamber of Commerce Official on GATT Membership

LD1101223594 Tehran IRNA in English 1834 GMT 11 Jan 94

[Text] Tehran, Jan. 11, IRNA—Secretary General of the International Chamber of Commerce Jean Charles Rouher said here Tuesday [11 January] that Iran would do better to join the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) if it wanted to have a wide scale on international markets.

He said there are no obstacles on Iran's membership in GATT.

The secretary general of the International Chamber of Commerce commented that voluntary exclusion from GATT does not imply any weakness on the part of any country.

Rouher said in his talks with the Iranian officials in Tehran he had been assured that the Islamic Republic is committed to continuing its national development projects that it started four years ago, as well as play a mc e active role in international circles.

In the same interview the Iranian secretary general of the (Iranian) committee of the International Chamber of Commerce Mohammad Mahdi Behkish said the Islamic Republic cannot do better than join GATT. He added that membership in GATT would benefit Iran and, among others, promote Iran's agricultural exports.

The International Chamber of Commerce has 117 member states and is active in 132 countries. It has 16 committees in various areas including tariffs, banking, insurance, tourism, and transportation.

Rouher is to leave Tehran later Wednesday.

Editorial Forecasts 'Difficult Days' for U.S.

NC1201084694 Tehran ABRAR in Persian 29 Dec 93 p 1

[Editorial: "The Year 1994 and Clinton's Dreams"]

[Text] The United States had a very difficult year in 1993, according to many. Most of the observers are unanimous on two points:

—The United States is planning for the future and the current uncoordinated policies are part of that planning.

—The Democrats as well as the people of the United States have made a mistake in electing Clinton as their President.

In any case, in 1993 the United States passed through a period in which it experienced problems inherited from the Republicans, including the events in Somalia and the ambivalence toward Russia.

However, in the Middle East the United States was successful in implementing a compromise more controversial and more treasonous than the Camp David accord. When 'Arafat—stripped of his gunbelt—shook hands with Rabin on the White House grounds, there were many who banged their heads against the wall in sheer fury. Some were not even Palestinians but had realized that the days of the Cold War had actually come to an end and most of the terms of that era had lost their true meaning.

In the early days of 1994, the U.S. President will have two very important meetings: with Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad in Geneva and with Russian President Yeltsin in Moscow. The Geneva meeting is of vital importance to the United States. If Hafiz al-Asad joins the trend of compromise, the Gaza-Jericho accord will be insured. In addition, if Israel makes peace with Syria, it will be able to enter the Middle East markets and the longstanding dream of the Zionists will materialize.

However, if Hafiz al-Asad insists on his former stance, the Gaza-Jericho accord will meet with the same fate as the Camp David accord. It will become the unsuccessful and isolated plan of an individual named 'Arafat who has neither legitimacy nor popularity.

Clinton will also have to empathize with Yeltsin and at the same time beware of someone such as Zhirinovskiy as the trend of events in Russia seems to be uncontrollable and unpredictable. The Russians need billions of dollars of assistance and the United States cannot hope to have such capital returned, especially since it does not know what to do about the vacuum created by the disbanding of the Warsaw pact in Eastern Europe.

Thus, it appears that the United States has difficult days ahead in 1994, especially since a united Europe is economically stronger than the United States. Even though it is not endowed with the U.S. political strength, it has very strong industries and considers rivalry in trade and commerce of greater importance than politics. The United States is aware that if it is hesitant in its approach toward countries such as the PRC and if it takes political considerations into account in its bilateral relations, Europe will immediately sign numerous agreements and will conquer the markets.

All these circumstances are not completely subservient to the wishes, needs, and capabilities of the Democrat administration in the United States, as Washington's cohorts and competitors have gauged the conditions prevailing in the world and have unconditionally demanded their rights. Therefore, Clinton will not be able to see all his dreams come true in 1994.

Southern Oil Field Begins Production

LD1101213294 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 2030 GMT 11 Jan 94

[Text] With the installation of an oil tank, the Qal'eh-Nar oil field around Andimeshk township started production on 11 January. To begin with, the oil field's production capacity will be around 5,000 barrels per day, which is to be increased gradually to 15,000 barrels per day. The construction and installation of the oil tank has cost around 5.3 billion rials. The total area of this oil field is 54 square km, and is situated 35 km north of Andimeshk, between the Kabud and Lab-Sefid oil fields.

According to an IRNA report, the Qal'eh-Nar oil field holds a total of 1,360,000,000 barrels of oil, out of which 117 billion barrels are estimated to be exploitable.

Pakistan

Spokesman Reacts to Indian Remarks on Kashmir

BK1101143094 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 11 Jan 94

[Text] Pakistan is not asking India to hand over Kashmir to anybody, but demands that the people of Kashmir be given the right to decide about their future. Commenting on the Indian foreign secretary's interview with Zee TV, the Foreign Office spokesman said in Islamabad today that India has kept the Kashmiris under bondage. Pakistan is asking India to free the Kashmiris, enabling them to decide about their fate, the spokesman said. The Indian foreign secretary, in his interview, had said India could never think of handing over Kashmir to Pakistan for the sake of peace. The Foreign Office spokesman said India was the first to take the Kashmir issue to the United Nations and had made an unequivocal commitment before the world body to hold fair and free plebiscite in occupied Kashmir in order to ascertain the will of the people, but, the spokesman added, India is now finding excuses to wriggle out of its clear pledges in the shape of UN resolutions.

Editorial Views Risk of Nuclear War With India

BK1101145794 Rawalpindi JANG in Urdu 10 Jan 94 p 3

[Editorial: "Sardar Asif's Timely Warning"]

[Text] The South Asian region continues to be haunted by danger and difficulties, as there is no sign of a resolution to the main dispute between Pakistan and India, the Kashmir issue. A new round of bilateral talks was recently held after a lapse of more than a year. The talks failed, however, due to India's refusal to budge even an inch from its earlier position. Some U.S. Government spokesmen, especially Joseph P. Hoar, commander in chief of the Central Command, are giving the impression that the talks did not fail and that there has been considerable progress. However, a review of the statements of Pakistani and Indian spokesmen would hardly convince a person to share U.S. optimism. The general impression is that the 2-3 January talks remained abortive. This means the black cloud of tension is still hovering over the Indian subcontinent.

Pakistani Foreign Minister Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali rightly told his hosts in Tashkent that the Indian subcontinent and South Asia are facing great danger. He is also correct in saying that if the Kashmir dispute is not settled in accordance with the principles of justice and the UN resolutions, then war might erupt again between the two countries. If this happens—God forbid—the war might become nuclear. Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali's statement could never be called an exaggeration. Observers of history and relations between the two countries know they have already fought three wars; Kashmir was the main dispute in all of them. Since the last war in 1971, the two countries have achieved nuclear capability. India openly carried out a nuclear explosion. Pakistan has not carried out such an explosion, but it acknowledges that it has the ability to make a nuclear weapon.

It is true that Pakistan has not manufactured a nuclear weapon, nor does it intend to do so. But if war erupts and it finds out that its opponent has a nuclear weapon, then Pakistan might take any step to defend itself. We know that on more than one occasion the two countries have come to the brink of war because of Indian military exercises; in these cases some foreign circles saw a real danger of nuclear war. Given the situation, Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali's expression of apprehension about a nuclear war cannot be called an exaggeration or an unfounded product of imagination.

There is a real risk of nuclear war that not only threatens peace in South Asia, but in the whole world. The only way to avoid such a danger is to strike at the root cause of tension between the two countries, the well-known Kashmir dispute. The world powers, especially the United States, should put all their weight behind resolving the Kashmir issue if they want to save the Indian subcontinent from devastation and nuclear war. The danger signal given by Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali is not without its causes. He has informed the world in a timely manner of a possible danger; prudence dictates that serious efforts be made to deal with the situation before we miss the chance. It is not

inappropriate to hope that the United Nations, the United States, the European countries, the Islamic Conference Organization, the PRC, and other Asian countries realize their responsibility in maintaining peace in this area and make wholehearted efforts to convince India to see reason. Pakistan has repeatedly conveyed its readiness to accept and implement any fair and reasonable proposal on Kashmir. Now it is up to India to realize its responsibilities and make sincere efforts to implement them. It will benefit the subcontinent and the two countries as well.

Editorial Decries Plight of Bosnian Muslims

BK1101101994 Rawalpindi JANG in Urdu 10 Jan 94 p 3

[Editorial: "Reaction to the Atrocities Against Muslims"]

[Text] Warren [Zimmermann], director of refugee programs in the U.S. State Department, has resigned in protest over U.S. policy in Bosnia. In his letter to U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, he said the United States is not ready to do anything more to stop the bloodshed in Bosnia; hence, he is resigning his post.

In Bosnia, Serbian and Croat forces are committing brutal atrocities against the innocent Muslims there. Muslims are rapidly being deprived of all the basic necessities, and Bosnia is not allowed to buy arms from any country. The situation has reached such an extent that even some UN observers and soldiers have committed excesses against Muslim women in Bosnia. Serbian and Croat forces are being provided with arms by Yugoslavia and other Western countries. In Bosnia, Russian soldiers are fighting along with the Serbs.

But the doors to all sorts of assistance have been closed to Bosnian Muslims. When Iran tried to supply the Bosnian Muslims with arms, the Egyptian authorities seized them at the Suez Canal. Of course, during Nawaz Sharif's tenure, Pakistan provided Bosnia with 250 million rupees in assistance and a large loan. Recently, during his visit to Bosnia, Mohammad Nawaz Sharif set up an aid fund worth 20 million rupees. According to the Bosnian president, if the 150,000 Muslim soldiers had arms, they could turn the tide of the war within a few days. The United States and other Western countries are a major obstacle to this; they are not ready to tolerate the existence of a Muslim state in Europe. The Western countries that champion the cause of human rights and human values keep silent about the repeated Serb violations of cease-fire accords.

It is a dismal fact that even the Muslim countries, except for Pakistan and Iran, have not raised an effective voice in support of Bosnia. Recently, mass Muslim graves have been discovered in Croatia. The Muslim world's silence regarding these atrocities is tantamount to insensitivity of the first order. If the Muslim countries were to unite and exert pressure on the United Nations, and if there was a shift in the policy of the United States and other Western countries, the Bosnian Muslims could be saved from the Serb atrocities, and have their freedom protected as well.

Sri Lanka

High Command Blamed for Pooneryn Casualties

BK1001122694 Hong Kong AFP in English 1140 GMT 10 Jan 94

[Text] Colombo, Jan 10 (AFP)—A Sri Lankan military inquiry has found virtually the entire northern high command responsible for a Tamil Tiger guerrilla asssault that left at least 637 soldiers dead, defence sources said Monday.

The military panel found seven senior officers, including the military intelligence chief, responsible for the unprecedented assault on the northern Pooneryn army and navy complex on November 11, the sources said.

Former army commander General Cecil Waidyaratne, who resigned at the end of December after taking responsibility for the attack, forwarded the findings of the inquiry to President Dingiri Banda Wijetunga on Sunday.

"Yes. I took responsibility but not the blame. Like Jesus Christ, I had to take responsibility for the others. I was crucified, while others slept," Waidyaratne told AFP.

He said the military panel appointed by him apportioned blame on officers found responsible for not preventing the debacle, but it was up to the government to initiate either court martial proceedings or take any other action.

Military sources said the findings of the four-man court ran to nearly 200 pages and was a serious indictment of the military's field commanders leading the battle against separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE).

A lieutenant colonel, who was promoted full colonel for holding out against the LTTE for three straight days at Pooneryn, was also found to be partly responsible for the debacle, the sources said.

The court of inquiry passed strictures against the northern commander Major General Rohan Daluwatte, chief of military intelligence Brigadier L. Balagalle, two other brigadiers, a colonel, a lieutenant colonel and a major.

They said the military would have to rethink its war strategy against the LTTE following the report submitted by the court compromising three brigadiers and a colonel, the sources said.

The LTTE is leading a protracted guerrilla campaign to establish an independent homeland in Sri Lanka's northern and eastern regions where the two million Tamil minority is concentrated.

LTTE Reportedly Imprisoned 1,500 of its Cadres

BK1101115594 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 11 Jan 94

[Text] The LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] is reported to be holding prisoner 1,500 of its cadres who had rebelled against terrorist leader Prabhakaran. Official sources told LANKAPUVATH that these prisoners were

being held under tight security, which have been described as hell holes. They are equipped with torture chambers. Intelligence reports say that among the other prisoners were terrorists who tried to desert the LTTE and others, like Mahattaya and Yogi, who have criticized the LTTE leadership for its intransigence in refusing to lay down arms and seek peace with the Sri Lankan Government.

Meanwhile, eight LTTE terrorists were reported killed by a Sri Lankan Navy patrol craft on the high seas in the eastern coast of Jaffna at a point between Point Pedro and Vettilaikerny on Saturday [8 January]. A military spokesman said that the LTTE had confirmed in a radio transmission that three of its boats were sunk and eight terrorists killed in the encounter.

LTTE's Death Sentence for Mahattaya Opposed

BK0901122494 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 9 Jan 94

[Text] A feeling of disenchantment has come over the people of Jaffna following the LTTE's [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam's] announcement last week of the passing of the death sentence of Gopalaswamy Mahendraraja alias Mahattaya and his supporters.

While about 120 close supporters of the former LTTE deputy leader were also taken into custody along with him, the Tiger leader Prabhakaran is also reported to have withheld the powers of several others including (Tompranga Yogi), (Baby Subranaigam), as well as, Anton Balasingham. Balasingham's Australian-born wife (Adel), however, is said to be unaffected. One-time second in command of the LTTE, Mahattaya was taken into custody by the loyalists of the Tiger leader Prabhakaran following the death of Sadasivam Krishnakumar, alias Kittu, in January last year. The death of Kittu occurred in an explosion on board an arms smuggling vessel intercepted by the Indian Navy. It was blamed on Mahattaya.

According to reports from the North, a section of the people, especially of the fishing village of Valvedditturai where both Mahattaya and Prabhakaran were born, believe that Tiger leader Prabhakaran was wrong in sentencing Mahattaya for treason. Many hail Mahattaya as a great leader who held the LTTE together at the time when Prabhakaran was in hiding in India.

Military Forces Prepare for Major Conflict

BK1201110094 Colombo VIRAKESARI in Tamil 26 Dec 93 p 4

["Defense Report" by R. Selva Raja]

[Text] The armed forces have been alerted following secret reports received by the Military Intelligence Unit stating that the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam [LTTE] are preparing to attack the Karainagar naval base and the Oorkavalturai and Mandaitivu Army camps. In its report, the Military Intelligence Unit has stated that after the destruction of the Nagathevanturai naval base, the next LTTE target will be the Karainagar base. The Tigers took six high-speed boats called water jets from the Nagathevanturai base. They also have two more boats of this type. Defense authorities are anticipating an attack on the Karainagar and Kankesanturai units. Navy gun boats and ships have been kept in readiness in Paruthiturai and Kankesanturai territorial waters to repel an LTTE attack.

Some night infiltration by extremists was detected on Oorkavalturai island. Recently two extremists were shot dead for landing on the island. Therefore, the armed forces are kept in combat readiness on the islands, which are under the control of the Army. Meanwhile, new Army commander Major General Gerry De Silva is going to take command on 1 January. Defense experts predict that during De Silva's tenure, there may be major changes in the Army. Tamil political circles say that one has to wait and see whether he will adopt the policy of confrontation followed by outgoing Lieutenant General Cecil Waidyaratne, or encourage negotiations.

Meanwhile, local elections are going to be held in the Eastern Province and Vavuniya. Nomination papers have been invited for this purpose. It is a different matter that the announcement for the elections has triggered strong protests among the Tamil parties. Reports from Jaffna say that President Wijetunge's announcement to launch an 'operation' [preceding word in English] in the north after these elections has created a major stir in the LTTE circles. The president's announcement indicates that a major offensive will be launched against the LTTE. In Jaffna, the Tigers have announced that the speeches made at last week's United National Party Conference indicate that according to the president's plan, a major offensive against the LTTE in Jaffna is planned for February. They have also announced that they are not ready for any talks, their doors are closed for negotiation, and they are also prepared for the war.

The Tigers adopted the path of confrontation after former President J.R. Jayewardene announced that the government was prepared for either war or peace. Jayewardene's announcement followed the death of 13 soldiers in the landmine blasts at Tirunelveli in Jaffna in 1983. Thousands of soldiers were killed within 10 years and tens of thousands of people became refugees. Saying that today's problem is only terrorism and not ethnic strife, the present president has announced that he is going to give surgical treatment [chathira chikichai] to the north. Tamil political leaders say that in the future, everyone will understand the connotations of the announcement.

Meanwhile, the government is seriously thinking about declaring the northern area to be a war zone. It is learned from highly reliable sources that Wijetunge has asked the three armed forces chiefs to be ready for a major conflict in February and to devise a strategy for his consideration before the 4 February holiday. It is certain that a major offensive will be undertaken in the north after the next independence day. Reports from Jaffna suggest that the Tigers are getting ready for a major conflict after their offensive in Pooneryn. The Tigers have constituted hundreds of suicide squads to counter the war to be undertaken

by the government in the north. Reports say that the Tigers are planning to deploy many more suicide squads than they deployed against the Army's Yaldevi operation and for their Frog Leap operation launched to overrun the Pooneryn and Nagathevanturai army and naval bases.

In any case, after the local elections in Eastern Province and Vavuniya, a major military offensive is certain in the north. The security force officers in Eastern Province and Vavuniya have already been directed to see that the Tigers do not infiltrate the areas where polling will take place during the elections. In the new year, the election process will be set in motion, but the leader of a popular Tamil political party has announced in Colombo that no political party with any self-respect will take part in the elections. Whatever is the case, there will no surprise even if the new year is declared as a year of war.

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